Notes on the races, castes and trades of eastern Bengal / by James Wise

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NOTES

ON THE

RACES, CASTES, AND TRADES

OF

EASTERN BENGAL.

BY

JAMES WISE, M.D.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE district of Dacca, and the various races now inhabiting it, form the subject of the following pages. This tract, situated between the river Ganges, Brahmaputra, and Meghna, is an irregular triangle, with its apex at the junction of the there rivers, while the base, running nearly east and west, is formed by several insignificant streams. On the north is the Zillah, or province, of Mymensingh, on the east Tipperah, on the south Báqirganj, and on the west Farrídpúr.

Numerous rivers traverse the district of Dacca, the majority of which, fordable in the hot season, are navigable during the rains. These rivers, flowing for the most part through alluvial plains, are subject to periodic floods, which undermine the banks and destroy the islands and "Churs." Their beds are gradually being raised by silt, and in a single season the physical aspect of a whole country may be changed. A fallen tree often diverts the course of a stream, and a sunken boat has been known to block up the channel of an important river.

The annual inundations submerge the whole country, and during July and August boats sail from village to village without difficulty. The level of the land, highest at the riverside, gradually falls away from the banks, consequently it is here the inhabitants build their houses.

Included in the Dacca district are two divisions differing from one another in almost every respect, and forming distinct geological tracts.[1] The first, embracing the Bhowál and Madhupúr jungles, consists of low ranges of hillocks (Ṭílá), running in parallel lines, with moist valleys (Baíd) between. The ridges, of the red laterite formation,[1] are rich in iron ore ; the valleys, of a stiff black loam, bear luxuriant crops of rice. The "Ṣál" (*Shorea robusta*) and date palm grow indigenously, and in its forests the tiger, bear, wild elephant, and "Sámbar"[2] still make their home. The greater portion, an unproductive waste with few inhabitants, is not only interesting as a debatable land separating the Hindus of the plains from the hillmen of the eastern frontier, but as a district in one part occupied by races alien to the natives of Bengal, in another by a mongrel and semi-Hinduized people disowned by all.

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[1] By Hindi speaking races these two formations are distinguished as Bhágnar and Khádar.

The second division is the alluvial, formed by the great rivers Ganges and Brahmaputra, and conterminous with their deltas. It is one continuous plain, without a knoll or rock to break its uniform flatness, as well as a boundless rice garden baked hard by a fierce sun and scorching winds in March and April, flooded during the rains, and transformed into a swamp by the cold drying breezes of December and January. The villages are raised above the flood on artificial mounds, and all communication is carried on by boats. In spite of fevers, cholera, and smallpox, the population, though sickly, is steadily increasing.

The climate of these two divisions differs little. The annual temperature averages 77·1°. The maximum in the shade seldom rises to 90° in May or September; and the minimum rarely falls to 50° in January. The hot months are more agreeable than in Calcutta, but the cold are less bracing. September and October are most relaxing, but February and March are very benign and pleasant. The average annual rainfall is 74·5 inches. Beginning in the first week of June the rains cease in September, although heavy thunder showers occur in October and November. The luxuriant vegetation indicates the prevalence of great humidity and heat The high temperature and moist atmosphere render the use of a vegetable diet necessary, and favour the cultivation of rice. In all parts "Paddy" is grown, but the experience of ages has taught that one soil is suited for the winter, another for the spring or summer crop. Of late years a large area has been planted with jute, which has become, next to rice, the principal article of export. But Dacca also produces cotton, safflower, mustard, chillies, tobacco, sesamum, sugar cane, and various pulses, while indigo was formerly extensively cultivated. The successful cultivation of these products, however, is only secured by a perpetual warfare against the encroachments of weeds and the attacks of insects.

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[1] By the people of Dacca Bhowál is usually called the "Tengar Mulk," probably from the Hindi "Tegrá," rising ground.

[2] The "*Rusa Aristotelis.*" In Dacca it is known as the "Ghaus," a corruption of the Persian "Gauz," an elk or deer.

A country enjoying so many advantages, and providing such an abundant supply of food, has determined the general occupation of the inhabitants. There being no pastures, the large majority of the population are agricultural labourers, engaged in cultivating the rich alluvial soil. From the earliest recorded times Bengal has been inhabited by a numerous and prosperous people, who, satisfied with their lot, rarely took part in the civil commotions raging around them. The large tidal rivers, again, abounding in fish and affording every facility for the transport of grain and other commodities, developed a race of hardy boatmen, who are still the finest specimens of Bengali manhood. The economic and personal wants of the inhabitants stimulated the growth of manufactures. Cotton cloth was woven from the earliest times, and a rude and brittle earthenware fashioned, but it is extremely doubtful if any other productions, requiring either delicacy of taste, or originality, ever rose above mediocrity.

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2. "Antiquities of Dacca," engraved by J. Landseer from drawings by Sir Charles D'Oyly, Bart. London, 1814–27, fol. The text gives a great deal of information regarding the architectural remains of the city.

3. "A sketch of the Topography and Statistics of Dacca." By James Taylor, Surgeon. Printed by order of Government. Calcutta, 1840, 8vo.

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SECTION I.

MUHAMMADAN.

GENERAL REMARKS, ON POPULATION AND RELIGION.
WORSHIP OF RELICS, OF PÍRS.
KHWÁJAH KHIZR, ZINDAHGHÁZÍ, PIR BADR, GHÁZÍ MIYÁN.
PANCH PÍR, SHAIKH SADU.
MUHAMMADAN REVIVAL.
SHARÍA'TULLAH—DUDHU MIYA'N—OTHER REFORMERS.
PRESENT STATE OF RELIGION.
MUHAMMADAN DIVISIONS AND TRADES.

Bahurúpía.
Bájunia.
Baldiyá.
Beldár.
Bhaṭiárá.
Bidrí-Sáz.
Chamra farosh.
Chandú-wálah.
Chaunrí-wálah.
Chhapar-band.
Chhípí-gar.
Chikan-doz.
Chírá-kash.
Chúrí-wálah.
Dafa'dár.
Dáí.
Darwesh.— (*a*) Chishtía — (*b*) Qádiría — (*c*) Naqshbandí — (*d*) Rafa'í — (*e*) Madáría.
Darzí.
Dastár-band.
Dast-farosh.
Dhárí.
Dhobí.
Dhuníyá.
Fálúda-wálah.
Goála.
Háfiz.
Hajjám.
Hakím.
Hakkák.
Halwáí.
Hawáí-gar.
Jild-gar.
Juláha.
Júti-walah.
Kahhál.

Kághazí.
Kalwár.
Kasáí.
Kathak.
Khwánd-Kár.
Koft-gar.
Kolú.
Kundakar.
Kunjṛa.
Kúṭi.
Lakaṛ-hára.
Lohár.
Madad-wálah.
Máhí-farosh.
Mahout.
Málí.
Míráṣan.
Mísí-wálah.
Muçawwir.
Mulla.
Munshí.
Murghí-wálah.
Naicha-band.
Nál-band.
Nán-baí.
Nardiyá.
Nílgar.
Ojhá.
Panír-wálah.
Pankha-wálah.
Paṭwa.
Qaláí-gar.
Rafú-gar.
Rakhwál.
Rangrez.
Raz.
Reza.
Çábun-walah.
Çaiqal-gar.
Sang-gar.
Shál-gar.
Shíahs.
Shikárí.
Shísha-gar.
Siyáhi-wálah.
Súzan-gar.
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Tántí.
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NOTES
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MUHAMMADAN.

THE most interesting fact revealed by the census of 1872 was the enormous host of Muhammadans resident in Lower Bengal—not massed around the old capitals, but in the alluvial plains of the Delta. In Dacca, for instance, the Muhammadans were very slightly in excess of the Hindus; in Maldah they formed 46 per cent. of the population; in Murshídábád 45 per cent.; and in Patna only 12 per cent. On the other hand, in the swampy tracts of Báqirganj, Tipperah, and Mymensingh they comprised nearly 54 per cent. of the people. This result was unexpected, and contrary to the conclusions arrived at from earlier inquiries, which, though obviously defective, were generally accepted as almost correct.

The history of the spread of the Muhammadan faith in Lower and Eastern Bengal is a subject of such vast importance at the present day as to merit a careful and minute examination.

The farther we advance in our knowledge of the early history of Bengal the more certain is it, that previous to the eighteenth century the Hindu inhabitants of Bengal far exceeded the Muhammadan in numbers, and as late as the sixteenth century three of the five Bhúyas, or leaders, of Lower Bengal, were Hindu chiefs commanding Hindu armies.

The enthusiastic soldiers, who, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, spread the faith of Islám among the timid races of Bengal, made forcible conversions by the sword, and, penetrating the dense forests of the Eastern frontier, planted the crescent in the villages of Silhet. Tradition still preserves the names of Ádam Shahíd, Sháh Jalál Mujarrad, and Kárfármá Çáhib, as three of the most successful and most bigoted of these enthusiasts.

As early as A.D. 1338 a Muhammadan king ruled over the Eastern districts from Sunnárgaon, and for a century and a half that city was the provisional residence of the rulers of Bengal. Although situated on the borders of the Empire, and surrounded by brave and aggressive races, Sunnárgaon attracted crowds of holy men and fanatics, whose mouldering tombs still mark the site of the ancient city. From it was summoned the preceptor, who trained the persecuting Jaláluddín in the doctrines of his intolerant creed, and to its families of Khwánd-Kárs, Eastern Bengal looked for its supply of Muhammadan instructors. During the five centuries and a half of Muhammadan rule in Eastern Bengal, we only hear of one wholesale persecution of the subject Hindus, and that was waged by Jaláluddín, the apostate, from A.D. 1414 to 1430. The only conditions he offered were the Koran, or death, and it is said that, rather than submit to such terms, many Hindus fled to Kámrúp, and the jungles of Asam and Kachhár, but it is nevertheless probable that more Muhammadans were added to Islám during these seventeen years than in the next three hundred.

In Muhammadan histories no mention is made of any large Muhammadan immigration from Upper India; and we know that in the reign of Akbar the climate of Bengal was considered so uncongenial to the Mughal invaders, that an order to proceed thither was regarded as a sentence of banishment. The Viceroys and nobles governing Bengal amassed wealth rapidly, and returned to spend it in the luxurious palaces of Delhi and Agra, while only a few officers and private soldiers, having married into native families, remained and settled in their new homes. While, therefore, each seat of government, and each military station, was in early times more or less a centre of missionary agitation, we find another agency from across the seas working towards the same ends, uninfluenced by the policy of the Delhi Court. On the south-eastern frontier of Bengal, a hardy and enterprising class of Muhammadans have been settled from the earliest historical times; and long before the first European landed at Chittagong, Arab merchants carried on an extensive and lucrative trade with its inhabitants, and disseminated their religious ideas among the people. How or when the dwellers on that coast became Mussulmán is unknown,[1] but when Barbosa visited

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[1] The people of Chittagong, however, ascribe their conversion to an invasion of their country by Nuçrat Sháh in the sixteenth century.—"J. A. S. of Calcutta," No. 4, 1872, p. 338.

Bengal at the beginning of the sixteenth century, he found the inhabitants of the interior, Gentiles, subject to the King of Bengal, who was a Moor; while the seaports were inhabited by Moors and Gentiles. He also met with many foreigners, both Arabs, Persians, Abyssinians, and Indians, and adds, "every day many Gentiles turn Moors, to obtain the favour of the king and governors."[1] Cæsar Frederick,[2] and Vincent Le Blanc,[3] who were in Bengal about 1570, also inform us that the island of Sondíp was then inhabited by Moors. In the sixteenth century, therefore, Chittagong was a centre from which an unceasing propagandism was carried on.

Wherever Muhammadan rule exists, slavery is developed, and during the centuries of misrule and oppression, through which Bengal passed, slavery was accepted by the Hindus as a refuge for their troubles. Bengal has for its encouragement of slavery always possessed an unenviable notoriety, and the Delhi Court obtained not only its slaves, but also its eunuchs, from the villages of Eastern Bengal. The incursions of Asamese, and Mags, the famines, pestilences, and civil wars impoverished and hardened the people, and drove them in sheer desperation to sell their children as Mussulmán slaves. The treatment of these slaves was humane, and their position comparatively a good one, as they were allowed to marry, and their families, supported by the master, added to the number of Islám.

Stories of forcible conversion, such as the following, are however narrated by the Muhammadans themselves, without any feelings of shame, or astonishment. While the Muhammadan population was still scattered, it was customary for each householder to hang an earthern water-pot (badhná) from his thatched roof, as a sign of his religious belief. One day a Maulaví, after some years' absence, went to visit a disciple, who lived in the centre of a Hindu village, but could not find the "badhná." On inquiry he was told that the Mussulmán villager had renounced his faith, and joined an outcast tribe. On his return to the city, the circumstances being reported to the Nawáb, a detachment of troops was ordered out, the village surrounded, and every person in it compelled to become Muhammadan.

Another class of Hindus voluntarily turned Muhammadans, as the only means of escaping punishment for murder, or adultery, as this step was considered full atonement for either crime.[4]

In later times this compulsory system was still farther extended. The tyrannical Murshíd Julí Khán enforced a law that any Amal, or Zamíndár, failing to pay the revenue that was due, or being unable to make good the loss, should with his wife and children be compelled to become Muhammadans.[1] Furthermore, it was the common law that any Hindu forfeiting his caste by a breach of regulations could only be reinstated by the Muhammadan Government, and, if it refused to interfere, the delinquent remained an outcast, ultimately taking shelter in the ranks of the Faithful. The same right was at first claimed by the English Government; but in 1769 it was abandoned, "there being no longer the necessity of publicly asserting the subordination of Hindus to Muhammadans."[2]

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[1] A description of the coasts of East Africa and Malabar, Hakluyt Society, 1866.

[2] "Hackluyt's Navigations," ii, 213–241.

[3] "Les Voyages fameux du Sieur Vincent Le Blanc," p. 273.

[4] "Bernier," vol. i, 144. "Voyages de Le Goowz," p. 157.

As late as 1791, Dr. Robertson maintained that the Muhammadans of India were "the descendants of adventurers, who have been pouring in from Tartary, Persia, and Arabia ever since the invasion of Mahmúd of Ghazní, A.D. 1002."[3]

When English magistrates first came in contact with the people of Bengal, they arrived at the conclusion that the Muhammadans only comprise one per cent. of the population,[4] and this estimate, formed on very insufficient ground, was generally assumed to be approximately correct.

In 1830 the first census of the city of Dacca was taken by Mr. H. Walters, who estimated the native population at 66,667, of whom 35,238 were Muhammadans, 31,429 Hindus.[5] Even as late as 1839, Mr. Taylor asserts[6] that the population of the district consists of Hindus and Muhammadans in nearly equal proportions; but in the city the latter constitute the principal portion of the inhabitants, their numbers, in 1838, exceeding that of the Hindus to the extent of 4,309, in a population of 60,617. The Revenue Survey, again,[7] as the result of their inquiries, arrived at the conclusion that the population of the Dacca district, between 1857 and 1860, consisted of—

Hindus	455,182
Muhammadans	449,223
Christians	210
Total	904,615

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[1] Gladwin's Narrative, quoted in "Harington's Analysis," iii, 274.

[2] Proceedings of Fort William Select Committee, dated August 16th, 1769.

[3] An historical disquisition concerning Ancient India in Robertson's Works, ii, 346.

[4] "Alexander Hamilton," ii, 25. "Luke Scrafton," in "Asiatic Annual Register," ii, 20. Governor Verelst, however, asserts "that eight out of ten were Gentoos."

[5] "Asiatic Researches," vol. xvii, 536.

[6] "Topography of Dacca," p. 243.

[7] "Principal heads of the History and Statistics of the Dacca Division," Calcutta, 1868.

These estimates, often wonderfully correct, indicate the general conviction, up to the taking of the census of the whole of Bengal in 1872, when it was discovered for the first time that, in Lower Bengal alone, there were 17,608,730 Muhammadans, of whom 7,948,152, or 45 per cent., resided in the nine Eastern districts, while the total number of Hindus in the same province was 18,100,438. The Muhammadan element was, moreover, found to be strongest in Báqirganj (1,540,965), Mymensingh (1,519,635), Dacca (1,050,131), and Tipperah (993,564).

In the Dacca district, the Hindus only numbered 793,789, or 43·3 per cent. of the whole population; while in the city of Dacca the population was 34,433 Hindus, to 34,275 Muhammadans.

These figures all point to the conclusion that it is to a change of religion, and not to the immigration of any Muhammadan race, that the existing predominance of the Mussulmán element in Eastern Bengal is due. While the proportion of Muhammadans in Hindustan and Bihár is comparatively low, it has in Bengal gone on increasing, until it has reached its present surprising height, and there is no present appearance of its diminishing.

The reasons which forced many Hindus to turn renegades, during the Muhammadan rule, have been specified; but as most of these influences have disappeared under English law we must look to other motives, still prompting the Hindu to change his belief. The most potent influence undoubtedly at the present day is the attraction of Islám itself. Bengal was never properly an Aryan country, and the Aryans who did reside within its borders always held an uncertain footing among the aboriginal tribes, driven down the Gangetic valley by the conquering races of Hindustan. The Hindu priesthood was therefore forced to adopt the blood-stained deities of its neighbours, and to blend the more elevated religion of the Vedas with the barbarous rites of the indigenes. Nowhere was Hinduism so debased, and so corrupt, and nowhere have the masses who held aloof been treated with greater contumely and inhumanity.

When the Muhammadan armies poured into Bengal, it is hard to believe that they were not welcomed by the hewers of wood and drawers of water, and that many a despairing Chandál and Kaibartta joyfully embraced a religion that proclaimed the equality of all men, and which was the religion of the race, keeping in subjection their former oppressors. Hinduism had prohibited the outcast from residing in the same village as the twice-born Bráhman, had forced him to perform the most menial and repulsive occupations, and had virtually treated him as an animal undeserving of any pity; but Islám announced that the poor, as well as the rich, the slave and his master, the peasant and the prince, were of equal value in the eyes of God. Above all, the Bráhman held out no hopes of a future world to the most virtuous helot, while the Mulla not only proffered assurances of felicity in this world, but of an indefeasible inheritance in the next.

Such appear to be the main reasons for concluding that the Bengal Muhammadan of the present day is a converted Hindu, and not a scion of any Mughal or Pathán stock; but farther, if we examine a crowd of Bengali villagers at the present day one, and only one, type of features, of complexion and of physique pervades them all, and it is impossible for the most practised observer, setting aside the different styles of dress, the beards, and the hair, to distinguish between a Muhammadan and a Hindu peasant. A careful examination of fifty Muhammadans, and fifty Hindus, selected indiscriminately from convicts of the Dacca jail, gives the following averages :—

	Muhammadans.	Hindus.
Average age	33½ years	32¾ years.
Height	5 feet 3½ inches	5 feet 4 inches.
Weight	7 stone 10 lbs.	7 stone 10 lbs.
Girth of chest	31 inches	32 inches.

Although the Muhammadan religion has spread, and is still spreading, among the low Hindu castes of Eastern Bengal, it is not to be inferred that the Muhammadans are an united body, as is generally assumed, without any divisions, or internal dissensions. It would, for instance, be impossible for the Arab to connect the corrupt Hinduized rites he witnesses in Bengal with those celebrated at Mecca, or to discern in the veneration of Pírs any relation to the orthodox faith.

Until the beginning of the nineteenth century the only great divisions of the Indian Mussulmáns were the Sunní and Shíah, the former predominating, sustained by the royal families of Dilhí, Haiderábád, Tonk, and Bhopál, the latter upheld by the dynasties of Golcondah, Lucknow, Murshídábád, and the Nawábs of Dacca.

The Shíah supremacy, lost during the anarchy of the eighteenth century, has never been regained; but the Sunní has gone on increasing, not as one harmonious whole, but by separation into rival, though mutually tolerant, sects. At the present day four sects, differing in many important particulars, especially in their sentiments regarding Christianity, disunite the Muhammadan population of Eastern Bengal.

These sects are the following :—

1. Sábiqí, who may be called the conservatives of the

debased Hinduized religion peculiar to Muhammadan India. The majority of the landholders, and, with few exceptions, the descendants of the old Sunní families, belong to it.

2. Farazí, or those following the Farz, or divine command. Sharí'atullah and his son Dudhu Miyán founded this, the most uncompromising sect of Sunnís, who, differing though little from the Wahábbí, repudiate that name and refuse to pray standing behind a person belonging to the first or third sect, or even to eat and drink with them.
3. Ta'aiyuní—from the Arabic Ta'aiyun, establishing, or manifesting; or Ráhí, from the Persian for a traveller—are the followers of Maulaví Karámat 'Alí and the Patna school, comprising the vast majority of the Dacca cultivators, thatchers, and hide merchants.
4. Rafi'-yadain, so called from their elevating their hands to the ears, each time that the words Alláh Akbar are pronounced in the course of prayer, while all the other sects only do so at the beginning of the invocation. They also fold their arms across the chest when praying instead of over the navel; and at the end of each supplication call out in a loud tone of voice Ámín, or Amen. They are the real Wahábbís of Eastern Bengal, and are said to be already more numerous than the Sábiqí. Many of the most enterprising and prosperous traders belong to this puritanical body.

The first, or Sábiqí, sect is in some respects the most interesting. It is the oldest, the most corrupt, and, until late years, it represented the dominant state religion. By a study of its heresies and superstitions we acquire a truer estimate of the paralysis that penetrated throughout the Muhammadan faith in Bengal, when the revival of the present day first dawned upon the people.

In no other country have the Muhammadans embodied so many infidel rites and customs with their own creed as in India, and M. Garcin de Tassy, in his interesting Memoir,[1] refers this to the too great simplicity of Islám for a country where an idolatrous and allegorical religion, appealing to the senses and imagination more than to the mind and heart, was prevalent. But, perhaps, the causes that corrupted the Hindu religion, namely, contact with alien and despised races, each having a peculiar cultus of its own, isolation from the cradle and centre of its authority, and the paucity of numbers as compared with the millions of unbelievers around them, also tended in the case of the Muhammadans to produce greater liberality of feeling and more sympathy for the sentiments and religious observances of the aboriginal races. The local gods, the gods whom men sought after in times of trouble and sickness, were too near and dear to the inmost heart of the Hindu convert to be abolished without substitutes. It was much easier to give them an anthropomorphous form and to replace them by saints endowed with equal powers and with spirits of as easy access to the worshippers.

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[1] "Memoire sur des Particularités de la Religion Musulmane dans l'Inde," p. 9.

Whether one, or all of these causes combined, created the tolerant spirit, there is no doubt that with a few glaring exceptions the Muhammadan rulers of India have been, during the last three hundred years, on the whole remarkable for their freedom from bigotry, and for their forbearance to the other religions of the peninsula. Sikandar Lodí (1488–1516), the last persecutor of the Hindus, destroyed the holy shrines of Mathurá, and strictly prohibited the Hindus from shaving their heads or beards; from performing their regular ablutions, and from worshipping Sítalá, the goddess of smallpox.[1] It is to the enlightened Akbar that the tolerant policy of the Mughal dynasty is to be referred. He paid adoration in public to the sun and to fire in 1580; and on the full moon of Srávan employed Brahmans to fasten the "rakhí" on his wrists.[2] He, and his courtiers, married Hindu wives, and the name of Muhammad, though one of his own, was repudiated by the emperor.

His son, Jahángír, was a still more indifferent Muhammadan. During his reign the Díwalí Pújah was kept, and cows were paraded in the royal gardens, while on the Sívarátrí, Jogis were invited to the palace, and the emperor ate with them. Moreover, in the eighth year of his reign, he celebrated his father's Sráddha in the mausoleum at Sikandrah, and the Muhammadan festivals, with the exception of the Shab-i-barát, being no longer observed, Parsí feasts were held instead, and seven out of eight of Akbar's grandsons received Parsí names.[3]

Dárá Shikoh, the eldest son of Sháh Jahán, was upbraided by his brother Aurangzib for not having even the resemblance of a Mussulman, and for composing a work, called Majmá-ul-bahrain, or the meeting of the two seas, having for its object the union of the Hindu and Muhammadan religious systems.

It is a well-known fact that most Indian Muhammadans depreciate the founder of their religion, and exalt the two martyred sons of 'Alí above him, and his immediate successors in the Khálifate.

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[1] Elliot's "History of India," vol. iv, 447, 448.

[2] "'Aín-i-Akbari" (Blochmann's Translation), i, 184.

[3] "Calcutta Review," October, 1869.

The annual Muhammadan fast, again, is properly a Shíah ceremony, its observance and the preparation of Tázias, or models of the tombs of the two martyrs, Hasan and Husain, being prohibited by Sunní doctors. In reality there are only two great festivals enjoined by the Koran, namely, the Îd-ul-fiṭr at the end of the month of Ramazán, and the Îd-ul-Qurbán, or Baqr-îd, as it is popularly called, on the tenth of Zihiffa, the last month of the year.

The preparation of Tázias, until late years, was carried on in every Muhammadan village, and each strove to make a more gaudy model than its neighbour. Hindu Zamíndárs subscribed towards its expense as the Muhammadan landlords did to the Durga image, and, as M. de Tassy points out, many peculiarities of the one festival resemble those of the other. Both last ten days, and on the 'Ashúra, or Manzil-ka-din, of the Muharram, and on the Vijayá-dasamí of the Durga Pújah; the biers, and the images of Durga, are thrown into a river, or tank. In some respects, however, the procession of Tázias also resembles the Rath Játtrá of the Hindus, and at both the greatest merit is attributed to the persons dragging the car. In Dacca there is a peculiar similarity between the two. In former days one Níl Bahr built a cenotaph in honour of Bíbí Fátimah, and for many generations a paper Tázia, called Turbat Haidarí, has been deposited in it during the Muharram. On the night of the tenth day the oldest and most venerable man sleeps in the building. A Parí reveals to him the exact hour that the Tázia should be removed, and as that hour approaches it is placed on a platform, or Gaddí Níl Bahr, and crowds of Muhammadans assemble and struggle for the honourable post of carrier. When it has once started it must not be put down until the tank, where it is finally cast away, distant four miles, is reached. During the year the lower orders are in the habit of vowing that if their wishes are fulfilled, they will assist in carrying the Turbat; and at the Rauza, or cenotaph, crowds resort on the 'Ashúra day with offerings of pigeons, sweetmeats, and solah chaplets (sihrá).

Another peculiarity of the Indian Muharram is that two biers are represented, while in Persia only one, that of Husain, was formerly carried in procession. Again, Bengali Muhammadans believe that the two sons of 'Alí became martyrs on the same day, and that the great fast is held in honour of them both, although they actually died in different months at an interval of ten years.[1]

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[1] Hasan was poisoned at Madínah, 28th Cafar, A.H. 50 (670); Husain was killed at Karbaláh, 10th Muharram, A.H. 61 (680).

In India the Bárah-wafát, or anniversary of the death of Muhammad, is observed by the Sunnís, on the twelfth of Rabiá-ul-awal; while in Turkey, Egypt, and formerly at Akbar's Court,[1] that day is celebrated as the anniversary of the "Maulid," or birth of the prophet.[2]

In all parts of India, especially in the neighbourhood of Muhammadan cities, there is generally a mosque, known as the Qadam Rasúl, where a footprint of the prophet is carefully preserved. On the banks of the Lakhya, a few miles east of Dacca, is a very celebrated place of pilgrimage, built on a lofty mound, apparently the site of an old fort. At this mosque is kept a large slab of dark slate, fashioned into the shape of a footprint, which is exhibited to any pilgrim on the payment of a fee to the custodian. In the same way as the Gayáwál Bráhman earns a livelihood by showing the Vishnupad, the Mutawallí gains his by imposing upon the credulous and ignorant villager. Equally absurd is the veneration paid to hairs, gravely stated to have once belonged to the prophet's beard, or moustache; and on the capture of Delhi, in 1857, not the least valuable articles of prize were a few hairs which had been preserved as relics in the Jamá Masjid of that city.

What, however, chiefly distinguishes the Indian Muhammadan from his brethren of other lands is his servile veneration for Pírs, or holy men. The diptych of Indian saints is very voluminous, and each province of India, nay, every district and city, has its own patron saint. In Eastern Bengal they amount to a considerable number, the most famous being the following:—

Sháh Jalál Mujarrad Yamaní of Silhet.[3]
Pánch Pír
Munná Sháh Darwísh } of Sunnárgaon.[4]
Khúndkár Muhammad Yúsuf
Sháh 'Alí Bághdádí of Mírpúr.
Pír Badr Auliyá of Chittagong.
Sháh Jalál Dakhiní of Dacca.
Ádam Shahíd of Bikrampúr.

The dargáhs, or shrines, of these holy men are annually visited by hundreds of pilgrims, both Muhammadans and Hindus, who often undergo as much exposure and fatigue in reaching them as the strict Hindus on their pilgrimages to the sacred places of Jagannáth, or Brindában.

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[1] Elliot's "History of India," v. 412.

[2] Muhammadans agree that Muhammad was born and died on the same day of the month.—"Calcutta Review," xxii, 366.

[3] "J. A. S. of Bengal," part i, No. 3, 1873.

[4] "J. A. S. of Bengal," part i, No. 1, 1874.

The "Qanoon-i-Islám"[1] gives a list of the Muhammadan saints of India, but only one belongs to Bengal. The names and lives of four others are recorded in Mr. Blochmann's invaluable "Contributions."[2] The celebrity, however, of those of Bengal pales before that of Faríd Shakarganj, Qutbuddín, and Nizámuddín of Delhi, the three most famous saints of Hindustan.

The veneration paid by the Indian Mussulmán to his Pír equals, if it does not exceed, that paid by the Hindu to his Guru or Gosain. The former implicitly believes in his miraculous powers; in his ability to cure diseases, to make the sterile woman conceive, and, as in the case of Sháh Karím 'Alí, of Jagannáthpúr, in Tipperah, to raise from the dead, and to cause rain to fall when and where he pleases. Muhammadans, even the most intelligent, accept such stories without hesitation. According to them there is no antecedent improbability in a human being exercising powers which are generally considered to belong to God alone. There are three kinds of Pír recognised: the Pír taríqát, the Pír haqíqat, and Pír ma'rifat, who fulfil certain mystical duties towards the individual; but the term has also a wider signification, being often applied to a departed spirit, and even to any old and venerable person. A Pír, likewise, may be ancestral (Jaddí), or inherited (Khalafí).

In India it is customary for a disciple on approaching his Pír to make the obeisance Sijdah, touching the ground with the forehead, or the still more obsequious, Taslím, or Kornish, actions censured as most culpable by the Arabs and foreign Muhammadans generally.

From the earliest ages of Muhammad retirement from the world, self-abstraction, and contemplation, were habitually followed in the certain belief that by so doing complete authority over the powers of nature would be attained. Hindu philosophy had much to say to the creation of Muhammadan hermits; but it is probable also, that the example of the Ráhib, or Christian anchorites, who retired into the desert before the army of Khálid bin Walíd, prompted men to follow in their footsteps.

Not satisfied, however, with these innovations, the Indian Muhammadans have superadded the worship of certain mythical personages around whom have collected various traditions and romances. The following list includes the most important, as well as most popular, of these immortals.

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[1] Pages 432–6.

[2] "J. A. S. of Bengal," part i, No. 3, 1873.

1. *Khwájah Khizr.*

Who this person was is still a subject of dispute among Muhammadans. The eighteenth chapter of the Koran describes the expedition of Moses and Joshua in search of Al Khedr, called Zúlqarnain, a title by which Alexander the Great is known all over the East; hence it is inferred that Khwájah Khizr is no other than Alexander. Most commentators, however, identify him with Elias, or Elijah, who, having drunk of the water of life (áb-i-hayát), never tasted of death, and Mr. Deutsch informs us[1] that in the Talmud Elijah appears as a kind of immortal tutelary genius, who goes about in the garb of an Arab. Others affirm that he was the companion, counsellor, and commander-in-chief of the armies of Zúlqarnain, or Kaikobad; but in Asia Minor Khizr Elias is a name of St. George of Cappadocia.[2]

Whoever he was, Kwájah Khizr is believed at the present day to reside in the sea and rivers of India, protecting mariners from shipwreck, and to be only visible to those who accomplish a forty days' watch on the banks of a river.[3] Muhammadans of all ranks make vows to him in seasons of sickness, or trouble, and present offerings in acknowledgment of any blessing, such as the birth of a son, attributed to his intercession.

The festival of the Berá, or raft, is properly observed on the last Thursday of the Muhammadan year; but in Bengal it is held on the last Thursday of the Hindu month Bhádon (Aug.–Sept.), which corresponds with the breaking up of the rains. The festival is kept by Hindus, especially by boatmen and fishermen, as well as by Muhammadans. The Berá, usually made of paper, ornamented with tinsel, has a prow resembling a female face, with the crest and breast of a peacock, in imitation of the figure head on the bow of the Mor-pankhí pleasure-boat. The effigy placed on a raft of plantain stems is set afloat at sunset, and with its flickering lights gives a picturesque aspect to the dark and flooded stream. At Murshídábád, where the festival was first kept by Siráj-ud-daulah,[4] the Bagarathí is illuminated by hundreds of rafts floating with the stream, while the banks are crowded by the inhabitants.[5] It is the custom for the person launching a Berá to deposit on the bank a few slices of ginger, a little rice, and two or three plantains, which are usually snatched up by some wretched beggar.

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[1] "Quarterly Review," October, 1869.

[2] The legends about Khizr are not unknown to Western literature. To them we owe the beautiful poem of "The Hermit," by Parnell, and the tale of "L'Ermite" in Voltaire's Zadig. It is supposed that the story of Khizr in the Koran was brought to Europe by the Crusaders, was embalmed in the folklore of the West, until quickened by the pen of genius, and graced with the charms of an apologue, or moral tale.

[3] The person who is favoured in this way usually adopts the trade of a water-carrier (bihistí).

[4] "Siyar-ul-Mutakherin," translated by Hájí Muçtafa, ii, 533.

[5] A picture of this scene is given in Hodge's "Travels in India during the years 1780–83." (London, 1793.)

Whether or no the modern idea of peopling the waters with deathless spirits was derived from the ancient Persians, or Hindus, it harmonized so well with the prepossessions of the Muhammadans as to be adopted without hesitation as a religious conception. It is, however, impossible with our present knowledge to explain why Khwájah Khizr, who is not regarded by other Oriental people as the guardian spirit of the waters, should have been selected as such in the Gangetic valley, more especially as in various parts of the Muhammadan world other fabulous persons are adopted by seafaring races. 'Abdul-Qádir Gilání and Abú-Zulaimah[1] control portions of the Eastern seas, while a female spirit, Máma Salmá, presides over the ocean beating against the cliffs of Rás Mosandim, at the entrance of the Persian gulf; and Indian mariners sailing past propitiate her by offerings of cocoanuts, fruits, and flowers.[2]

On the Coromandel coast again Qádir Walí Çáhib is the patron saint of sailors,[3] as Shaikh 'Alí Haidarí was at Cambay in the fourteenth century,[4] and Abu Ishaq al Kázrúní at Shíráz.

2. *Zindah Gházi.*

It is difficult to determine whether or not Zindah Ghází, Ghází Miyán, and the Sat Pír, are the same or different individuals, but there is a striking similarity in the fables appertaining to each. The woodcutters in all parts of the Sunderbuns invoke certain mythical beings to protect them from tigers and crocodiles. In the twenty-four Pergunnahs it is Mubarrá Ghází; in the eastern parts of the Delta it is Zindah Ghází, the immortal warrior; while by Hindu workmen it is Kálú-ráya, or Sív, riding on a tiger, holding in his right hand an arrow, in his left a bow.[5] Mubarrá Ghází is said to have been a faqír, who reclaimed the jungly tracts along the left bank of the river Huglí, and each village has an altar dedicated to him. No one will enter the forest, and no crew will sail though the district, without first of all making offerings at one of the shrines. The faqírs residing in these pestilential forests, claiming to be lineally descended from the Ghází, indicate with pieces of wood, called Sang, the exact limits within which the forest is to be cut.[6]

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[1] "Pilgimage to El Medinah and Meccah," i, 194.

[2] "A Journey through Persia," by James Morier, p. 6.

[3] "Qanoon-i-Islám," p. 243.

[4] "Travels of Ibn Batuta" (Lee), p. 146, 43.

[5] Ward's "Hindus," iii, 186.

[6] "Statistical and Geographical Report of the twenty-four Pergunnahs

Zindah Ghází, according to the legend, came to Bengal when Rájah Matak ruled over the Sunderbuns. He had a dispute with the monarch, who, convinced of being in the right, vowed to give his only daughter Shushila in marriage to him on its being shown that his, the Rájah's, opinion was wrong. This the Ghází did, and won his bride. As no man saw him die, he is believed to reside in the depths of the forest, to ride about on tigers, and to keep them so subservient to his will that they dare not touch a human being without his express commands. Before entering a jungle, or punting through the narrow channels, whose shady banks are infested by tigers, boatmen and wood-cutters, both Hindus and Muhammadans, raise little mounds of earth and make offerings on them of rice, plantains, and sweet-meats to Zindah Ghází, after which they fearlessly cut brushwood and linger in the most dangerous spots.

In Dacca there is a popular band of musicians known as Zindah Sháh Ghází ká gáyan, who recite songs in honour of the Ghází, and from whom the above particulars were obtained.

This strange myth, there cannot be any doubt, is merely the Hindu Kálú ráya converted into a Muhammadan immortal to suit the taste of the superstitious boatmen.

3. *Pír Badr.*

Besides Kwájah Khizr, Bengal supplies other animistic ideas regarding water, and Pír Badr shares with him the dominion of the rivers. This spirit is invoked by every sailor and fisherman, when starting on a cruise, or when overtaken by a squall or storm. All Muhammadans agree that he resided at Chittagong, but his history does not disclose the reason why the attributes of a water-demon were conferred on him. According to one account he was a shipwrecked Portuguese sailor, named "Pas Gual Peeris Botheilo," who reached the shore by clinging to a piece of wreck. The guardians of his shrine, however, say that about a hundred and fifty years ago, Pír Badr arrived at Chittagong "floating on a rock," and informed the terror-stricken inhabitants that he had come all the way from Akyab on this novel craft! The neighbourhood of Chittagong being then infested by Jins, or evil spirits, he exterminated them, and took possession of the whole country. The modern Dargáh, or cenotaph, of Pír Badr stands in the centre of Chittagong, and is regarded as the palladium of the city. Faqírs are the custodians, and the mosque with its rooms for pilgrims are kept scrupulously clean. On the walls of the cenotaph are ten niches for ten oil-

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District," by Major R. Smyth, 1857. "Sang" is the Sanskrit for union, and the pegs of wood signify identity with the Ghází.

lamps, which are lighted every evening and burn all night. Pilgrims from all parts of Bengal visit the Dargáh in fulfilment of vows, or to obtain the favour and intercession of the saint, while Hindu fishermen regard him with as much awe as the Muhammadans. His 'Urs, or festival, is celebrated annually on the twenty-ninth of Ramazán, the anniversary of his death. There can, however, be little doubt that Pír Badr is no other than Badruddín Badr-í-'Alam, for many years a resident of Chittagong, who died A.H. 844 (1440), and was buried in the Chhotá Dargáh of Bihár, but about whom we possess no further particulars.[1]

4. *Ghází Miyán.*

This much more celebrated personage is worshipped by both Hindus and Muhammadans, and his Shádí, or wedding, is a very popular entertainment throughout Hindustan. In the north-western parts of India he is identified with Sálár Mas'úd, the nephew of Mahmúd of Ghazní, who was born at Ajmír A.H. 405 (1014), and after performing prodigies of valour in battle against the infidels, and capturing Delhi and Ayodhya, settled at Bahráich in Oudh. Here he was attacked by the Hindus under Rái Sahar Deo and Har Deo, and in the battle that ensued he was killed and his army cut to pieces. This occurred on the fourteenth Rajab, A.H. 424 (1033).[2] Around this warrior's name strange and incredible stories have accumulated. It is believed in Oudh that the bones of the hero were only discovered in the fourteenth century, and that whilst being exhumed many miraculous events occurred;[3] but a native historian informs us[4] that Sikandar Lodí in the fifteenth century abolished throughout his dominions the annual procession of the spear of Sálár Mas'úd because of its being contrary to orthodox belief. No legislation, however, could stop such a popular holiday as this has always been.

It is perhaps impossible to explain the meaning of the absurd frolics indulged in throughout India by all classes when celebrating the Shádí of Ghází Miyán. Mr. Wilson[5] identified the Jhandí, or flag, of Sháh Madár with the spear of Ghází Miyán, and regards the Persian word "Shádí," used by the vulgar, as a corruption of the Arabic "Sháhidí," or testimony; hence martyrdom, or the death of a Muhammadan in a war with infidels.

In corroboration of this conclusion it is remarkable that at Gasyárí, in the Banda district, a fair is annually held in the month of Baisákh in honour of Ghází Miyán, at which Daffálí faqírs wrap coloured rags and horse-hair at the end of a long bamboo, round which they sing and often burn incense.[1]

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[1] "J. A. S. of Bengal," part i, No. 3, p. 302 (1873).

[2] Elliott's "History of India," vol. ii, App, 513--49; and "Supplemental Glossary," i, 251.

[3] "Asiatic Annual Register," vi (1801).

[4] "History of India," iv, 448.

"Asiatic Journal," iv, 75.

In some parts of India the Ghází is spoken of as the son of a famous General serving the King of Delhi, who adopted the garb of a faqír, retired from the world, and shortly afterwards died, on which the son, Madár, joined the troops of a Pathán leader, and distinguished himself by his bravery and hatred of the Hindus. Hence his name has come to be regarded as the symbol of daring courage, and at the present day is used as a battle-cry by Hindustani troopers. While his nuptial ceremonies were being celebrated the enemy appeared, and in an attempt to drive them back he was slain. His death and the removal of the nuptial banners and emblems are supposed to be represented at the popular festival, but Mr. Wilson also sees a resemblance to the marriage ceremonies of the Súdras.

At Bahráich, on the first Sunday of Jeth (May–June), a great fair is held at the tomb of Sálár Mas'úd, when crowds of pilgrims present votive offerings at the shrine. At Munír, near the junction of the Son and Ganges, the anniversary of the death of Ghází Miyán is celebrated. The history of this fair is interesting as showing how legends pass from one holy man to another.

Van Graaf,[2] sailing up the Ganges in 1669 stopped at "Monera." The inhabitants were poor cultivators, and the country was formerly a desert until a very holy man, "Hia Monera,"[3] struck by the aspect of the place, fixed his abode there, exterminating the wild beasts, and erecting a small chapel where he performed many miracles. At his death he left much money, with which "his valet" built a mosque and a tank, resorted to by faqírs, who pretended to work miracles. The mosque still stands, but the faqírs, finding the worship of Ghází Miyán more profitable, have established a fair in his honour instead.

The festival of Ghází Miyán is not popular in Eastern Bengal, but few villages are without a shrine dedicated to Ghází Çáhib. This spot is usually a diminutive Dargáh, with a raised mound of earth in the interior, before which every Muhammadan and Hindu makes obeisance as he passes; and whenever sickness attacks his family, or when the Çáhib's intercession is solicited, the villager makes votive offerings of flowers, milk, and sweetmeats. Along the banks of the Lakhya, on the outskirts of villages, a mound of earth, smeared with cowdung, stands beneath a grass thatch. This mound has generally two knobs on the top, said to represent the tombs of Ghází Miyán and his younger brother Kálú. On the twenty-second day after a cow has calved the first milk drawn is poured over the mound as a libation, and in times of sickness rice, plantains, and sweetmeats are offered.

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[1] "Statistical and Descriptive Account of the North-west Provinces of India," i, 118. (Allahabad, 1874.)

[2] "Voyages de Nikolaas Van Graaf aux Indes Orientales." (Amsterdam, 1719.)

[3] This was Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahyá Muníri, a famous Çúfi, who wrote the "Maktúbát Yahyá Muníri," in a series of 250 letters to his disciples. He died about A.D. 1370.

5. *Pánch Pír.*

According to Shakespeare and Forbes, Pánch Píriyá is a term applied to any person who worships the five Pírs of the Mussulmáns; or belongs to a caste of Halál Khors. But, who are the Pírs of the Mussulmáns? No Muhammadan Maulaví in Eastern Bengal can name them, or give any explanation why they are so called. The Pánch Pír are familiar to every one, being invoked whenever danger threatens; but among Bengali Muhammadans there is no special ceremony, and no festival, kept in their honour. Every Muhammadan boatman on unfurling his sail shouts, either

"Alláh, Nabí, Pánch Pír, Badr, rakhiyá Karo!"

or the following doggrel verses:—

Hamáre achhe pulabán
Ghází achhe nigahbán
Sar Ganga, Pánch Pír, Badr! Badr! Badr!

The great Akbar was denounced, Mr. Blochmann informs me, by some hostile critic for being a Pánch Píriyá, and no Muhammadan, on account of his eclecticism and toleration.

Again, in his paper[1] on the ballads and legends of the Punjáb, Major Abbott translates a poem in which the appearance of the Pánch Pír to the legendary hero of the Punjáb (Rasálu) is mentioned, and in a note these five are said to be,

Bahá-ul-haq,
Sháh Rukn 'Álam,
Sháh Shamsuddín,
Makhdúm Jahániyán,
Faríduddín 'Aṭṭár Shakarganj.

The first three are saints peculiar to Multan; the fourth died A.H. 785 (1383), and his tomb is at Uch Sharíf;[2] while the fifth, the most famous, died A.D. 1266, and over his remains a tomb was erected by Nizámuddín of Dilhi, which still stands, at Pak Patan, between the Bias and Chenab, and is a favourite place of pilgrimage on the fifth of the Muharram.[3] But, as Mr. Blochmann points out, these are merely the names of the five most celebrated Muhammadan saints of the Punjáb, and the list affords us no insight into the meaning of the term Pánch Pír as used at the present day.

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[1] "J. A. S. of Bengal," vol. xxiii, 159.
[2] "Travels of Mohan Láll," p. 454. "J. A. S. of Bengal," v, 796.
[3] "Mohan Láll," p. 376.

Sir H. Elliot[1] mentions that Ghází Miyán and his bhánjá, or sister's son, Hathili, are regarded by the peasantry of the Doáb, as two of the Pánch Pír, but the names of the remaining three are not given.

In Bengal again, no individuals are mentioned, and the Pánch Pír are collectively invoked as guardian spirits in times of trouble. Amid the forest that has overgrown the old city of Sunnárgáon, is a very holy shrine, called the Pánch Pír, where five unfinished tombs stand, to which Hindus and Muhammadans come from long distances in fulfilment of vows; but no one can tell who the saints were, or whence they came.

It must be borne in mind that the number five has always been regarded by Hindus as a lucky one. Five members form the Pancháít, or native court of arbitration, and the Panchamí, or fifth lunar day, is one of peculiarly good omen. Some such idea may be the origin of this peculiar worship, and the term five may be merely used to signify an indefinite number, as half-a-dozen does in England.

As has been mentioned, all Muhammadans invoke the Pánch Pír, but still more strange, Hindus follow their example. All Hindustani Kumhárs, and many Nápits, Kándús, Dhobís, and Goálas belong to the sect called Pánch Piriyá, which has two subdivisions, or Sreni, that neither eat together nor intermarry. The one eats flesh that has been legalised according to Muhammadan (zabh), or Hindu (balí), law, drinks spirits, and follows the Ṣákta ritual on Hindu, the Pánch Piriyá on Muhammadan festivals. The other, the more modern, are followers of Vishnu, eating no animal food, touching no spirits, and never making pilgrimages to Muhammadan Dargáhs, as the first do.

In Bihár the Pánch Piriyá belonging to the low castes engage a Daffálí faqír to officiate at their religious ceremonies, which consist in the sacrifice of a cock, and the repetition of several prayers. When a disciple is initiated a cock is always sacrificed, and the neophyte must bake bannocks of wheaten flower and distribute them among the company to avert the wrath of the Pánch Pír.

In other respects the worshippers of these saints are Hindus, their Purohit being often a Kanaujiya Brahman, while the Guru is always the Mahant of the Nának Sháhí Akhárá. This connection with the Nának Sháhí sect seems to indicate the origin of the Pánch Piriyá. Nának Sháh taught universal toleration, and insisted that not only were the essential doctrines of Hinduism and Muhammadanism analogous, but that one Supreme Being, adored as either Harí, or Alláh, was sought after by the devout of both creeds. It was natural that in such a tolerant sect eclectic teachers should spring up, selecting from the ritual of each religion whatever was likely to recommend itself to the vacillation of either party. If this be the true origin of the Pánch Piriyá belief, or not, it is beyond a doubt that very many of the lower and least stable classes of native society profess it, although it has failed to make any impression on the higher ranks whose position is secured, and whose spiritual welfare is confided to the Brahmans.

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[1] "Supplemental Glossary," i, 251–70.

A well-known resident of Eastern Bengal is popularly called the Pánch Píriyá Çáhib, it being said that his parents, losing one child after another, were advised by a favourite servant to consecrate the next to the Pánch Pír, and by so doing preserve him. They followed this advice, and were gratified to find their son grow up strong and healthy. Hindus always quote this as an instance of the benefits accruing to those who believe in the Pánch Pír.

6. *Shaikh Sadu.*

The worship of Shaikh Sadu, or Míran Jí, is peculiar to India, and, in Bengal, is almost exclusively confined to Muhammadan courtezans.

At Amrohah, a celebrated Sayyid Jagír in Rohilcund, there is a mosque, said to have been built by one 'Ambar in the reign of Kai Kobád, and restored by Sayyíd Muhammad, Mír 'Adl, in the sixteenth century. In the thirteenth century Shaikh Çadruddín, whose name has been shortened to Sadu, was Maulaví of this mosque, and famous for the amulets and chains (gandá) he bestowed. To this shrine crowds of Hindu and Muhammadan pilgrims resort every Thursday, in the certain belief that by presenting gifts to the custodians, and by hanging on to a chain, the "Chain of Desire," all the dearest wishes of their hearts will be attained. Adjoining the shrine are the tombs of his mother 'Áishah, and of a familiar, Zain Khán.

The following story explains the reason why Shaikh Sadu is worshipped by the impure and dissolute native. While ploughing one day this saintly personage turned up a lamp, designed by a great magician, which as soon as it was lighted caused four genii to appear. The Shaikh, a very immoral man, employed these genii as pimps, but having debauched a girl, they put him to death. After death he became a jin, but he still revisits this world and reveals to men, more often to women, a knowledge of futurity, conferring also certain supernatural powers.

Other spirits exercising similar powers are regarded by the superstitious classes as of inferior rank, hence the Hindustani proverb, "Ae Mír, bhage Pír."

The behaviour of a person inspired by Míran Jí resembles the possession counterfeited by the low caste Hindu, or the Shaman. Intimating beforehand that at a certain time he will become inspired, and that "Shaikh Sadu Ka Karáhi"[1] will be observed, musicians are engaged, and a crowd of sympathising friends collected. At the appointed time the performer gesticulates, and dances, uttering unintelligible words and disconnected sentences, which are eagerly caught up and interpreted in accordance with the wishes of the audience.

Educated Muhammadans having no faith in this exhibition, denounce it as immoral and unholy, but the uneducated still regard the gibberish of the possessed person with the same awe as they do the unmeaning jabber of the demented.[2]

The Muhammadan revival of the nineteenth century is one of the most momentous events in the modern history of India, not only from its uniting under the banner of a common faith millions of the population, but from its threatening to become a political movement, having for its object the overthrow of the Christian government by a Muhammadan one, with the Koran and the sword as the leading agents of civilisation. The seed sown by a few earnest untitled men, has borne abundant fruit, and at the present day overshadows the whole of Eastern Bengal. To understand how it happened that a movement unsupported by the landlords, or the richer classes, and discouraged by the State, spread far and wide, embracing the large majority of the agricultural and manufacturing classes, it is necessary to go back to the days of the Muhammadan rule and ascertain the state of religion at that time, and the means which were adopted to preserve and promote the faith of Islám.

The rulers of India were generally Sunnís, and a Shíah was an abomination in the eyes of the bigoted Alamgír. Sunní Nawábs ruled at Dacca from A.D. 1612 to 1702, when the anarchy following the death of Aurangzíb, raised the Shías into positions of influence, and made them lieutenants of the different Bengal provinces. From 1702 to 1843, Shíah Nawábs resided at Dacca, but, though Shíah in creed, they were obliged to worship in the Sunní mosques, on the two great Îds, and join in the Khuṭba, or prayer for the Sunní emperor. Like the Nawábs of Murshídábád, they had no scruples against employing Sunní servants, or in enlisting Sunní soldiers. The Muhammadan population of Eastern Bengal has always been Sunní, and their spiritual leader or Qází, appointed by the Náwab, was also of the same creed. He administered the law as expounded by the Muftí; superintended the education of children, being responsible for the orthodoxy of the religion taught them; and decided all disputes connected with religion, or public worship. Over him was the Qázíyul-qúsát, the supreme ecclesiastical judge of appeal, who resided at Delhi.

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[1] This entertainment is also known as Baithak.

[2] For additional particulars regarding Shaikh Sadu, *see* "Qanoon-i-Islám," p. 278; "Mrs. Mír Hasan 'Alí," ii, 324; "Roebuck," pt. ii, 26; and "Calcutta Review," No. lxvi, p. 295.

Again, scattered throughout the country were Naíb, or Deputy Qázís, who watched over the spiritual welfare of the masses, instructed them in the faith, and suppressed dissent, or any expression of independent thought. The power of these officers was great, and equally dreaded by the monarch and people, while their treatment of backsliders, or renegades, was most summary. The culprit, summoned into their presence, was admonished, and three days given him to recant. If at the end of that time his heart remained hardened, the Náwáb was appealed to, and in most instances death was inflicted. Such cases, by all accounts, were rare, but the fact that this was the law must have had a most wholesome effect in preventing the promulgation of any new doctrines, and in keeping all united in the bonds of a common faith. The Sunní, however, was no bigot. His religion sat lightly on him, and he participated with the Shiáh in his fast and lamentations during the Muharram, as well as with the Hindus in the frolic and license of the Dasahrá and Holí.

In 1765, when the Díwání passed into the hands of the East India Company, a great change took place. The Qázís still survived deprived of power; but no longer a terror to evil-doers. They became judicial officers without any authority as religious instructors, or arbitrators. Pírs, faqírs, and Khúndkárs, abounded; but their influence was confined within a limited circle of disciples, and did not extend to the densely populated villages of the interior. For three generations, or fifty-five years, the Mussulmáns of Eastern Bengal, being without a shepherd, receded more and more from their national faith, and conformed, as has been seen, to many superstitious rites of the Hindus. But one of those movements which seem to occur in the history of all religions, causing the thoughtful to examine the grounds of the popular belief, was about to dawn on the Muhammadans of Eastern Bengal, and evoke a spirit which is not as yet quiescent. The first person who stirred his countrymen, by resuscitating the dormant spirit of their faith, was Hájí Sharía'-

tullah, born of obscure parents, probably Juláhas, or weavers, who resided in a village of Parganah Bandarkhola, zila Farrídpúr. When eighteen years of age he made the pilgrimage to Meccah, but instead of returning, as was usual, he remained a disciple of the Wahábbí leaders then ruling the sacred city. About 1820, after an absence of twenty years, he came back to India a skilful disputer, and a good Arabic scholar. On his way to his home he fell among Dakáíts, who plundered him of everything, including many memorials of his residence in Arabia, and finding life insupportable without books or relics, he joined himself to the gang, and shared their many wanderings. The simplicity of his character and the sincerity of his religious convictions awakened the consciences of these wicked men, who ultimately became his most zealous followers. Such is the story told at the present day of the first step taken by this remarkable man. For several years Sharía'tullah quietly disseminated his new doctrines in the villages of his native district, encountering much opposition and abuse, but, attracting a band of devoted adherents, he by degrees acquired the reputation of a holy man.

The chief Wahábbí innovations introduced by him were the non-observance of the Friday prayers, of the two great Îds, and of the Muharram, and he ordered that the titles of Ustád and Shágird, terms which did not suggest complete submission, should in future be used in the place of Pír and Muríd, which had for ages been the respective designations of the master and his pupil. He also prohibited the laying on of hands, which was customary at the initiation of a disciple, but required from all "taubá," or penitence, for past sins, and a resolution to lead a more righteous, and godly, life for the future. It is a curious fact that none of these new ideas excited much opposition, but on his promulgating the dogma that it was a deadly sin, and one derived from the Hindus, to allow a midwife to cut the navel cord when it was the obvious duty of the father to do so, he roused a spirit of revolt which caused many to fall away. The Zamíndárs were alarmed at the spread of the new creed, which bound the Muhammadan peasantry together as one man. Disputes and quarrels soon arose, and Sharía'tullah was driven from Nayábárí, in the Dacca district, where he had settled, and returned to his birthplace. There he resumed his ministry, and in a short time enlisted the vast majority of the uneducated and most excitable classes of the Muhammadan population. His influence became unbounded, and no one hesitated to carry out his orders. He acted with great prudence and caution, rarely assuming any other character than that of a religious reformer. The movement originated by this man attracted little attention during his lifetime, and his name is rarely met with in the annals of that day. On looking back, however, at his career, there is much to repay inquiry. That he, born of poor Muhammadan weavers, amid the swamps of Eastern Bengal, should have been the first preacher to denounce the superstitions and corruptions, which a long contact with Hindu polytheism had developed, is sufficiently remarkable; but that the apathetic and careless Bengali peasant should have been roused into enthusiasm is still more extraordinary. To effect this required a sincere and sympathetic preacher; and no one ever appealed more strongly to the sympathies of a people than Sharía'tullah. Springing from one of their lowest and most despised classes, his blameless and exemplary life was admired by his countrymen, who venerated him as a father able to advise them in seasons of adversity, and give consolation in times of affliction.

He is described as a man of middle height, of fair complexion, and with a long handsome beard. He usually had his head covered with a voluminous turban, and his waist-cloth, worn like a petticoat, was not triced up as it is by Hindus and Muhammadans generally.

A very different person was his son, Muhammad Muhsin, better known as Dudhu Miyán, who, though of ordinary abilities, exerted an influence far surpassing that of his father. His name is a household word throughout the districts of Farrídpúr, Pubna, Báqirganj, Dacca, and Noacolly, and the number of his followers at the present day testifies to the thoroughness of the work that he and his father accomplished.

Dudhu Miyán was born in 1819, and, while still young, visited Mecca, where his followers were taught to believe that visions and revelations of a nature tending to his future exaltation, were vouchsafed to him. On his return he devoted himself to the spread of his father's doctrines, and to others which he introduced. For instance, he insisted upon his disciples eating the common grasshopper (phangá) which they abhorred, because the locust (ṭiḍḍa) was used as food in Arabia; and vigorously contended that there was no greater difference between the two insects than between the goat of their villages and one from the banks of the Jumna.

The most remarkable advance made during Dudhu Miyán's lifetime was the organisation of the society. Following the example of the Vaishnavas, he partitioned Eastern Bengal into circles, and appointed a Khalífa, or agent, to each, whose duties were to keep the sect together, make proselytes, and collect contributions for the furtherance of the objects of the association. They furthur kept Dudhu Miyán, who was usually styled the Pír, or simply Maulaví, acquainted with everything occurring within their jurisdiction, and whenever a Zamíndár tried to enforce his legal rights against one of the sect, funds were provided to sue him in the courts, or, if it could be safely done, clubmen were sent to destroy his property and thrash his servants. During his father's lifetime the sect had never opposed, or come in contact with, the law of the land; but the high-handed actions of the son united Zamíndárs and indigo-planters against him. He tried to compel all Muhammadan ryots to join his sect, and on refusal caused them to be beaten, excommunicated from the society of the faithful, and their crops destroyed. The Zamíndárs again endeavoured to prevent their tenants joining, and, it is said, often punished and tortured the disobedient. A mode of torture, intensely painful, but which left no marks to implicate any one, is said to have been adopted on both sides. The beards of recalcitrant ryots were tied together and red chilli powder given as snuff. Coercion, however, failed, and the landholders did little to check the onward spread of the revival.

It was among the cultivators and village workmen that Dudhu Miyán gained the largest number of converts. He asserted the equality of mankind, and taught that the welfare of the lowest and poorest was as much an object of interest as that of the highest and richest. When a brother fell into distress it was, he taught, the duty of his neighbours to assist him, and nothing, he affirmed, was criminal, or unjustifiable, which had this object in view. Enemies in consequence alleged, that witnesses were suborned, and paid for by the funds of the association.

Dudhu Miyán and the Hájís, as his followers were originally called, became objects of dread to the Hindu, old Muhammadan, and European landlords. Evidence to convict a prisoner could not be got, and outrages were committed with perfect impunity. It was, however, against the levying of illegal cesses by landlords that Dudhu Miyán made his most determined stand. That a Muhammadan ryot should be obliged to contribute towards the decoration of the image of Durgá, or towards the support of any of the idolatrous rites of his Hindu landlord, were intolerable acts of oppression. In this he was certainly right, as the only apology for their continuance is their antiquity, and adaptation to the feelings of the people. But, he advanced a step farther when he proclaimed that the earth is God's, and that no one has a right to occupy it as an inheritance, or levy taxes upon it. The peasantry were therefore persuaded to settle on Kháç Mahal lands, managed directly by the Government, and thus escape the payment of any taxes, but that of the land revenue, claimed by the State.

Dudhu Miyán was constantly compromising himself by the lawlessness of his conduct. In 1838 he was charged with instigating the plunder of several houses; in 1841 he was committed to the sessions on a charge of murder, but was acquitted; in 1844 he was tried for trespass and illegal assembly; and in 1846 for abduction and plunder. The riot of 1838 assumed at one time a very threatening aspect, and a detachment of Sepoys was sent from Dacca to quell any disturbance. It was, however, found impossible to induce witnesses to give evidence, and on each occasion he was acquitted. At Bahádurpúr, where he generally resided, every Mussulmán stranger was fed, while Eastern Bengal was overrun by his spies, and the interests of the whole neighbourhood were in his keeping. He settled disputes, administered summary justice, and punished any Hindu, Muhammadan, or Farangí, who dared to bring a suit for recovery of debt in the adjoining Munçif's court, instead of referring the case to his decision. Emissaries carried his orders to distant villages, and his letters, signed "Ahmad nám ma'lúm," often had the ordinary Hindu superscription to allay suspicion. He taught that there was no sin in persecuting those who refused to embrace his doctrines, or who appealed against the orders of the society and its constituted leaders.

Having broken the law with impunity, Dudhu Miyán took a bolder step. Mr. A. Dunlop, an indigo-planter of Panch Chur factory in Farídpúr, had for many years been an uncompromising opponent, and several times succeeded in causing the Miyán to be arrested, and tried for illegal actions. The Miyán, bent upon revenge, easily found willing agents to execute his orders. On the 5th of December, 1846, a large body of armed men attacked and burned to the ground the factory of Panch Chur. After pillaging the adjoining village, they departed, taking with them the Bráhman Gomastha, who was afterwards cruelly murdered in the Báqirganj district. Dudhu Miyán and sixty-two of his followers were tried by the Sessions Judge of Farrídpúr, in July, 1847, and convicted, but on appeal to the Çadr-Adalat they were acquitted.

In 1857 Dudhu Miyán was thrown into prison, and the story goes, that he would have been released, if he had not boasted that fifty thousand men would answer to his summons, and march whithersoever he ordered them.

Several actions of their Pír must have been disapproved of by many of his followers, as for instance when he forcibly carried off a Brahmani girl and made her his "nikah" wife; but even this violent act did not cause them to desert him. On the contrary, they believed in him to the last, and liberally spent their hard earned savings in promoting the interests of the sect. At one time a few disciples seceded. They had been to Meccah and ascertained that the teaching of Maulaví Karámat 'Alí was orthodox, while that of their own spiritual chief was Wahábbí in tendency and heterodox. This secession exasperated Dudhu Miyán to such a pitch that he instructed his people to kill the renegades wherever, and whenever, found.

Dudhu Miyán is described as having been a tall handsome man, with a dark flowing beard, and a large turban wound round his head. He died at Bahádurpúr 24th September, 1860, and was buried there, but the Arial Khán river has, within the last few years, washed away every trace of his house and tomb. His wealth, at one time considerable, being expended on lawsuits and intrigues, his family was left poor. Three sons survive, of whom none have as yet exhibited any of the energy, or abilities, of their father. The sect is consequently diminishing in numbers, and many families are yearly joining the next, or Ta'aiyuní, divisions.

At the present day the term Farazí is indiscriminately used when speaking either of the sect founded by Sharía'tullah or that established by Karámat 'Alí; but the Muhammadans of Dacca call the followers of Dudhu Miyán, Farazís, while those obeying the teaching of the Patna school are styled Ta'aiyuní.

While Dudhu Miyán was enrolling disciples in Eastern Bengal, other reformers were stirring up the dormant fanaticism of their brethren in other districts, and the wave passing over the plains of Farrídpúr received a fresh impulse from other sources. In 1831 the ex-dakáít Mír Naçr 'Álí, better known as Titu Miyán, presided over a band of credulous followers in the neighbourhood of Baraset. Having accompanied Sayyid Ahmad to Meccah, he returned to preach a new creed to the weavers, and other despised classes, in Jessore and Nadiyá, among whom he established the sect known as Maulavís. The chief object of this movement was the rejection of all Hindu rites, and the exclusion of all Muhammadans who refused to embrace the new creed. The Hindu landlords had no sympathy with the new organisation. Complaints against the Maulavís being lodged in the Zamíndárí courts, fines were inflicted and generally levied; but on a landlord carrying into effect the sentence of his court, a tumult arose, and the Maulavís rushed to arms. These fanatics, taught to believe that Titu Miyán was invulnerable, and that he could give the same charm to his followers, were attacked on the 18th November, 1831, in a stockaded village, their leader shot, and two hundred and fifty prisoners lodged in 'Alípúr Jail. This local disturbance being effectually put down, nothing more was heard of the sect.

Far more important, however, than the revival begun by

Sharía'tullah and Titu Miyán, was that initiated by Sayyid Ahmad at Patna, in 1820. At first this new association claimed to be identical with that started by Sharía'tullah; but it was soon apparent that their aims were different and antagonistic. Both concurred in repudiating the numerous superstitions observed by all classes of Muhammadans, but the Ta'aiyuní, or Patna sect, introduced many innovations unknown to the followers of Sharía'tullah and Dudhu Miyán. By the Arabs, as well as the Ta'aiyuní, the Farazís are known as Wahábbís, a name, however, repudiated by all but the extreme party, called Kafi'-yadain.

The first preacher (wá'iz) of the Patna school, who visited Eastern Bengal, was Muhammad 'Alí, a Khalífa appointed by Sayyid Ahmad, whose censures were chiefly directed against the practice of Hindu superstitions. He forbade the reading of the "fátiha," or prayer for the dead; the offering of "shírní," or sweetmeats, at the tombs of holy men; and the use of music at weddings. The next was Wiláyat 'Ali, one of the four original Khalífas chosen by Sayyid Ahmad at Patna, in 1820. His opinions were still more pronounced, and more deeply tinged with Wahábbí formalism. For example, he enjoined the frequent raising of the hands, and the utterance in a loud tone of voice of the word Ámín at the end of each prayer. He also maintained that the Hadís, or traditionary sayings and doings of Muhammad, contained authoritative instruction on many points, being only second to the Koran in value.

The most successful and celebrated missionaries, however, were Maulavís Karámat 'Ali, Zain-ul-abadín, and an Arab, Sayyid Muhammad Jamál-ul-lail, whose preaching among the villages of Eastern Bengal has had the most momentous effects, not only by uniting under one banner the vast majority of the middle and working classes, but also by arousing the intolerant spirit of Muhammadanism, which had lain dormant for nearly a century.

Little is known regarding the history of Zain-ul-abadín, but of Maulaví Karámat 'Alí, who died in 1874, full particulars are available. He was son of the Sarishtadár of the Jaunpúr Collectorate. When sixteen years of age, he studied under Maulánáh 'Abd-ul-'Azíz of Delhi, and afterwards under Ahmadullah, a famous teacher of Jaunpúr. Excited by the preaching of Sayyid Ahmad, he followed that remarkable man to Calcutta, became his disciple, and accompanied him to Meccah. On his return he proved himself one of the most valuable deputies of the Patna mission.

Sayyid Muhammad Jamál-ul-lail fled from Madínah because his father insisted on his marrying an Arab damsel. He came to Dacca about 1843, and joined with Karámat 'Ali in disseminating the new doctrines. Although ignorant of Bengali, and hardly acquainted with Hindustani, his commanding figure, luxuriant beard, and voluminous turban were, in the eyes of the ignorant villagers, credentials of his sincerity and capacity, and soon attracted to him a numerous circle of disciples. He married Bengali wives, one of whom, a resident of Dhámráí, possessed a considerable property. In 1854, incensed by the peculations of the Amlah, he decided, contrary to the wishes of the other shareholders, to collect the rents himself. His opponents assembled clubmen and tried to capture him, but, boiling with anger, he rushed within doors, seized a gun, and wounded several of the assailants. For this offence he was tried, and sentenced to seven years' imprisonment in the Rájsháhí Jail. On the expiry of his term he returned to Dacca an altered man, much broken in spirit. He died in August, 1872, and was buried in the village of Naichabandtolá, opposite Dacca. His cousin, Sayyid Muhammad Hásham, or Arab Çáhib, as he is familiarly called, still trains disciples, and propagates the same religious creed as his predecessor.

The doctrines taught by these later Khalífas differed mateally from those of Muhammad 'Alí and Wiláyat 'Alí. The former held that the Hadís, a human compilation, and therefore full of errors, could not be considered an infallible guide; but admitted that the teachings of the Imáms, as contained in the Fiqh, or practical jurisprudence, were binding, although contradictory passages, and a diversity of doctrines, could be found in them. These defects were not, they argued, so vital, nor the tenets grounded on the various readings so absolute, as to justify Muhammadans in breaking asunder the bonds uniting the world of Islám.

Futhermore, these reformers denounced the employment of music at weddings, as being a sensual and discomposing pleasure; the offering up of the fátiha at the grave of deceased relatives; and the worship of Pírs, and other saintly personages.

These opinions regarding the Hadís and Fiqh had always been held by the Muhammadans of Bengal, but the assertion that music was immoral, and that the fátiha, as well as the becoming veneration of Pírs, were sinful, roused much opposition and gave rise to a learned, though idle, discussion.

In later years Karámat 'Alí made the important admission, that India under the English rule was not Dár-ul-harb, a country where the infidels were legitimate objects of attack, as had been maintained by Dudhu Miyán and Wiláyat 'Alí.

The principal doctrines of these reformers being founded on the fundamental truths of Islám, excited at first no little surprise, as they had been lost sight of by the Hinduized Mussulmáns of Bengal.

According to them, man, by nature feeble and prone to evil, cannot without assistance learn to know God or obey His commands. Muhammad is the only true mediator between God and His rebellious children; but the holy men of past ages possess a certain limited power of obtaining pardon for the penitent. It is therefore regarded by the Ta'aiyuní as a meritorious act to make offerings, or Li'llahí, at the graves of saints in the name of God, as they believe that the supplicant, being moved by the associations of the place, prays with greater sincerity and fervour.

The custom, however, observed in Bengal for ages, of presenting bread to the manes of ancestors on the Shab-i-barát, and of making offerings at the tombs of deceased relatives and friends on the fourth, tenth, twentieth, and fortieth days after death, were denounced as deadly sins. In their stead the relatives were instructed to employ a Maulaví to visit, twenty-one days after the funeral, the house of mourning and perform the service called Niyázullah, or thanksgiving to God, consisting of a few passages from the Koran, or Khatm-ul-Ambiya, in a chamber fumigated with sandal-wood and frankincense.

Although the lamentations and singing, the Ta'zias and the noisy pageantry of the Muharram, are reprehensible, the Maulavís recommend their disciples to fast and spend the tenth, or Shahádat ka roz, in religious exercises, as a devotional act.

The Shab-gashtí procession, with its discordant music, its frolics and license, no longer traverses the streets, having been put down by these puritanical teachers; and Muhammadan marriages (Shar'í ul Shádi) are now dull and uninteresting ceremonies. No music, or dancing, is allowed, and only a few relatives witness the marriage. The bride is no longer adorned with garlands of flowers; the Kandúrí ceremony is omitted; and the "Marocha" not constructed. The marriage service is performed by a Qází or Maulaví, and a Kábín, or marriage settlement, is drawn up.

The only festivity allowed is a feast, or Walíma, given on the marriage day, or on one of the two following days, and to which the relatives, the headmen of the village, and of the trade, are invited.

The superstitions connected with the birth of a child have also been pronounced sinful. On the fortieth day, when the mother becomes ceremonially clean, the husband makes ready the thanksgiving feast, called 'Aqíqa. Two he-goats (Khací) are offered for a male child, one for a female, which, like the sacrificial goat of the Îd-ul-qurbán, must be without spot, or blemish. This offering being regarded by some as a propitiatory one (çadqa), the flesh is distributed to faqirs; but the majority look upon the occasion as a social feast at which relatives, and friends meet to enjoy themselves. The victim is slaughtered by a Mullá, the bones and offal being buried, while the skin is given to any beggar. The father, mother, grandfather, and grandmother of the child are strictly forbidden to taste the flesh of the sacrifice.

The Ta'aiyuní observe the five daily prayers, and before each they clean their teeth with a piece of stick (miswák), rinse their mouths, and wash their hands. They strictly observe the Jum'a namáz, or Friday prayer, in the public mosque, which the Farazís and Wahábbís dispense with; and before leaving their homes it is customary to shave, bathe, and put on clean garments. The stricter members also observe the "tahajjud," or prayer, at 3 a.m.

The Ta'aiyuní, furthermore, dresses differently from any other Muhammadan. His loins are ungirded in expectation of the advent of the long-looked for Imám Mahdí, and, instead of the ordinary waist-string, or Kardhaní, he wears a leather strap (tasma). He is also enjoined to allow his beard to grow, and to wear his hair long, or, better still, to shave it entirely off; and is forbidden to eat food off a golden or silver dish, or to touch with his lips the mouthpiece of a tobacco pipe mounted with silver. Further, he must not pray in silken garments,[1] as was often the custom formerly, but in cotton or woollen attire.

Women are as punctilious as men, especially in attending to the regular prayers. Of late years they have laid aside the graceful Sárí, and adopted a jacket with long sleeves, which does not add to their comeliness, and, still more important, is not admired by females of other classes. They also object to staining their feet and nails with henna, or "menhdí," as is done throughout most parts of Muhammadan Asia.

Another usage has had a most important bearing on the business habits of this class of Muhammadans. Interest (súd) is denounced by the Maulavís, but as large profits (manáfï) are legitimate, among them are found great traders in jute, hides, rice, and country produce generally, who never join with professional bankers, or money-lenders, unless they agree to a division of profits instead of a certain rate of interest. When giving an advance of money it is usually stipulated that the sum shall be repaid within a certain period, and that an eighth, or fourth, of the net profit shall be paid to the lender, in addition to the principal.

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[1] The cloth, called Mashrú', made of silk and cotton, in which a Muhammadan may lawfully pray, is not worn in Bengal.

By this arrangement the lender often receives more than the market rate of interest, but if the payment be delayed nothing additional is gained. This system of profits, however, is virtually interest under another name.

Strange to say, the reformed Muhammadans of Dacca still cling to many Hindu superstitions in spite of the denunciations of the Maulavís. They wear amulets (ta'wíz) containing a sentence from the Koran, and place implicit trust in earthern platters, inscribed with holy texts, and hung up over their doors, or around their villages, believing such objects to be more efficacious against epidemics than the sanitary skill of the Yunání, or European, physicians. Again, when smallpox attacks their families, Sítala is worshipped with as much faith as is shown by the Hindu Málákárs, and in 1874, when the disease was present in their villages, a "ghat," daubed with red lead, on which a cocoanut and plantains were placed, stood in every house. They are determined opponents of vaccination, but occasionally have their children inoculated with all the mummery of the Sítala Púját.

Under pretence of greater sanctity and stricter orthodoxy they unconsciously practice many other Hindu usages; thus, on touching a Christian they bathe, and on his entering their houses, throw away all cooked food or drinking water. Their immaculateness, however, is not soiled by contact with a Hindu of the vilest class, or by his presence within doors. It is the Wahábbí who with perfect consistency treats Hindus and Christians with equal repugnance.

It would not be unreasonable to infer that the promulgation of these new puritanical doctrines would produce a corresponding improvement in the character of the members; but, according to the best authorities, the Maulavís, no change is as yet visible. On being asked if the Muhammadans of his sect oftener speak the truth than those of the old school, a Maulaví replied, that the latter lied being ignorant of the moral turpitude thereby incurred, but that the former, who were able to distinguish between what was right and what was wrong, uttered falsehoods more circumstantially and glibly. There can be no doubt that the Ta'aiyuní inhabitants of Dacca are more addicted to drink than the old Muhammadans. An amusing scene was witnessed in 1874 at the Pancháít of one of the most bigoted quarters of the city which had been summoned to try a young man for drunkenness and creating a scandal. The evidence was overwhelming, and the culprit was sentenced to receive twenty-five blows with a shoe. He claimed the right of replying, and, without attempting to extenuate his crime, pointed out that if consistent and impartial the meeting should inflict the same punishment on his boon companions. This was admitted, but when he enumerated the sons of all the leading members present, and stated that he was prepared to prove their complicity in drinking spirits, the assembly was hurriedly dissolved, and the young man escaped the punishment he so richly merited.

The Ta'aiyuní differ in many important respects from the Farazí and Wahábbí. They not only regard the Friday prayer with peculiar reverence, but often make it like Sunday in Europe, a day for popular demonstrations and for forming combinations against the Zamíndárs. The Patna Khalífas have always pretended that this movement was identical with the Farazí, and on the strength of this identity extracted money from the ignorant peasantry, who were also induced to leave their homes and join the Sitána colony. But, from time to time a few returned, and having confessed that the subscriptions went to support a delusive cause, the enthusiasm gradually died away.

There can be no doubt, however, that much secret disaffection, fostered by fanatical Khalífas and Maulavís, still exists in the ranks of the sect; but it is generally said that subscriptions are now unwillingly paid, and fewer recruits drafted to the north-west frontier than was the case ten years ago.

The foregoing is a simple but correct sketch of the Muhammadan religion as found in Eastern Bengal at the present day. Islám is there passing through a period of trial, and seems in danger of being split up into rival creeds, unless injudicious interference on the part of the Government causes it to unite against a common enemy. But, in absence of any provocation, it is likely that jealousy will increase, and the two most important divisions, the Sábiqí and Ta'aiyuní, learn to hate each other as brethren of different beliefs always do. As the new school is of a more progressive tendency it will probably assume the offensive, and, owing to its numbers, silence dissent as well as all expression of independent opinion. The Sábiqí are disunited, without any organisation, but the Ta'aiyuní, under the guidance of able leaders, are bound together by the ties of a widely diffused and powerful society. The former, again, are friendly to the English Government; the latter, at heart estranged, do not dare to show themselves hostile.

As the religion of the Muhammadans of Bengal has become corrupted by the adoption of many Hindu superstitions, so it will be found, on further inquiry, that the professional and labouring classes have also introduced many innovations derived from the same source.

In each Mussulmán "qaum," or class, there is a Pancháít of elders, by whom matters affecting the interests of the trade, or company, are discussed, and all offenders against their unwritten laws summarily dealt with.

In every Muhammadan village, or quarter of a town, there is another, and equally efficient, court of arbitration. In Dacca there are twenty-two of these Pancháíts, each consisting of from five to fifty members, and often including Hindus of respectability, and liberal views. A Pancháít is presided over by a Sardár, or Mír Mahalla, under whom there is at least one Náib-Sardár, or deputy; a Sákhí-dár, literally one who gives evidence; and a Gorait, or messenger.

The post of a Sardár is hereditary, and when old, or disabled by sickness, he must vacate in favour of his son. The position is no sinecure, as his duties are multifarious, for all deaths, births, and purposes of marriage, are reported to him. He summons the Pancháít, gives directions about funerals, arranges the marriage ceremony, and settles what subjects are or are not, to be laid before the court. In all domestic and private quarrels he is consulted, and in charges of assault, or crime generally, full details are submitted for his decision. His orders being absolute, the fines are always paid. When the court assembles, he submits to it the business for which it was summoned, points out the proper course of action, and if a conclusion cannot be arrived at he appeals to another Pancháít, which reconsiders the matter and records its decision, which must be accepted. The Pancháít always meets in the evening, and when the court is dissolved a feast is given at which the Sardár receives two shares of the food, one of which he eats, the other he sends to his family.

In cases of notorious drunkenness, or great immorality, remonstrance having failed, a very severe punishment, called "Nal-pání-bándhna," is inflicted, by which the delinquent is ostracised, and no one will eat or smoke with him, or even permit him to enter or sit down in their houses. Relatives must banish him from their society, and if he die impenitent no one dares to bury him. Life under such circumstances becomes insupportable, as the punishment is greater than can be borne. In most instances the offender acknowledges his transgression and, after paying a heavy fine, is re-admitted into social communion.

The Sákhí-dár is the servant of the Sardár, and receives at feasts a double allowance of food. When a death occurs in the quarter information is given to him, and a fee of four anas paid, and when a marriage is contemplated he receives four anas, and a handkerchief in which a betel-nut is tied. A piece of the nut he delivers to each member of the Pancháít, as an invitation to the marriage feast.

The Gorait, again, is merely the messenger of the Sákhí-dár, and he receives as pay one-half of the fees collected.

When a girl is married nothing is given to the Pancháít of her quarter, or village; but when a boy goes to another quarter, or village, he pays one rupee to the Pancháít, one rupee to the mosque, and one to the Zamíndár of the land on which the bride's house stands.

Such is the autonomy of Muhammadan citizens. Though a copy of the Pancháíts and Dals of Hindu castes, it is far more liberal, being established not so much for selfish, or sordid, advantages as for the common welfare of the citizens. The court is thoroughly secular and republican, the opinion of each member carrying equal weight, although that held by the president is generally followed. These Pancháíts possess great influence among the people, and in Farazí villages, as they take cognizance of all offences, it is exceedingly rare that any case of violence, or assault, committed within them finds its way into the regular courts.

The Muhammadans of Bengal have followed in many respects the system of caste as practised by the Hindus, although the principle that a son must carry on the trade or occupation of a father has never been reduced to a formula. Still, they have placed many honest and useful handicrafts under a ban, while others of a more objectionable nature are reckoned honourable.

The most respectable occupations are those of the Darzí, Jildgar, Jútí-wálah, Nánbáí, Naichaband, Paṭwá, Rangrez, and Rafúgar; the most dishonouring those of Bájunia, Beldár, Chamṛafarosh, Dhobí, Dhuniyá, Juláha, Kalwár, Kolu, Kútí, Mahífarosh, and Nílgar.

The learned professions, such as the Hakím, Háfiz, Khwándkár, Muçawwir, Mulla, and Munshí, are respected by all classes, and few deserving students, or scholars, ever want for patronage or encouragement. The chief reason why one trade is accounted less reputable than another is, that the most honoured were originally Muhammadan, the despised ones Hindu. The eight trades mentioned as honourable provide for wants which were secondary in the eyes of the Hindus. The trade of the tailor, bookbinder, shoemaker, baker, and darner, unknown in Bengal when Muhammadans first settled there, was necessarily followed by their own countrymen from Upper India, and therefore did not entail any disgrace or degradation. A position being thus secured for these tradesmen, it was in vain that those engaged in new occupations strove to acquire rank and privileges disallowed by the older conservative bodies. This struggle of exclusion on the one hand, and of admission to equal rights on the other, is still eagerly contested by the various parties.

The avocations of the musician, delver, washerman, fishmonger, and indigo-dyer, formerly pursued by outcast Hindus, were subsequently adopted by poor Mussulmáns, or by converts to that faith, and have consequently remained inferior ones. The hide merchant, cotton-carder, Jamadání weaver, distiller, oilman, and Kútí, who follow occupations new to the Hindus, are for the same reasons outcast. The bigotry and intolerance of the Chamṛafarosh and Kútí are so remarkable as at once to excite suspicion of their recent conversion, while the low estimation in which they are held by other Muhammadans can only be accounted for by this fact.

The different stages through which converted Hindus pass before they gain a position of thorough equality with the old Muhammadans can be traced at the present day. The Bediyás were outcast Hindus thirty years ago, but a Mulla now ministers to them, circumcision is practised, the Ramazán fast is kept, and the regular prayers offered up; but they cannot enter the public mosque, or find a resting-place in the public graveyard. In a social point of view they are still aliens, with whom no gentleman will associate or eat. The treatment of the Chaṇḍál by the Súdra is in no respect more rigorous, or harsh, than that of the Bediyás by the upper ranks of Muhammadans.

The Kútí, again, have advanced a stage farther, being not only the most dogmatic, but also the most sanctimonious of their faith. The mosques, only opened to them within the last few years, are now held and managed by their leaders, who decide what persons are, or are not, entitled to worship in them. Beyond this, however, the division has not made any stride. No Muhammadan of good family will intermarry with them, or eat from their dishes; but the ordinary burial service is performed at the Masjid, and the dead are permitted to lie in the public cemetery.

The previous sketch has shown us that the religion, customs, and social divisions of the Bengali Muhammadans are deeply tinged with Hindu superstition. It remains to be proved that the Muhammadans as individuals bear much resemblance to their Hindu fellow-countrymen.

The educated Muhammadan, being of liberal ideas, respects all religions, despising none, and sympathises with the sincere worshipper of God, wherever found, although convinced that he is the heir of the latest and best revelation. The Arabic and Persian classics, containing as he thinks all that is worth knowing, are his daily study; but he neither reads modern literature nor sends his sons to the public school, as both are considered to favour infidelity and scepticism. Science is a sealed book which he has no desire to open, while English and

Bengali are foreign languages to him. He attends to his religious duties, observes the fast of Ramazán, and dispenses charity freely and unostentatiously. His anxiety to preserve the family name untarnished is a ruling passion, often carried to extremes. Not only does he scorn to tell a lie, or perform a mean action, but he will rather lose a lawsuit than appear before a magistrate of low birth. Inferior to the Hindu in chicanery, he can, if driven to it, wield the same weapon, and make a determined, if not always successful defence. To the poor he is kind and considerate, many charitable actions being done in private for which he gets no credit. He visits the sick servant in his hovel, sending him food and sherbet prepared in the zanánah, and helps poor students by providing lodgings as well as paying a Munshí to instruct them. In the society of strangers he is polite and lavish of praise; but he seldom visits, sits at the table, or partakes of food with Christians, as was the invariable custom a century ago. It is melancholy to contemplate the present state of the better classes of Muhammadans, for with many excellent traits of character, they have no energy or ambition left. Instead of adapting themselves to the changes of modern civilisation, they listen to tales of ignorant Faqírs, or to sedition taught by fanatical Maulavís, and lament that the days of 'Alamgír, and of Mussulmán supremacy, have passed away. The young are growing up in idleness and ignorance; the old wasting their lives by debauchery, intemperance, and opium. The establishment of a Madrasah, or school, managed by Muhammadan gentlemen, will in time exert a beneficial effect, but the fear that the rising generation will resemble Young Bengal keeps many from sending their sons to it.

The vast majority of Bengali Muhammadans are ignorant and simple peasants, who of late years have been casting off the Hindu tinsel which has so long disfigured their religion. They are now taught that to be good Mussulmáns nothing more is necessary than the repetition, at stated intervals, of certain prayers in a language they cannot pronounce, still less understand. In many places it is difficult for the ryots to find a person capable of conducting the services of the congregation. In 1874 the inhabitants of several villages assembled on the banks of the Lakhya to celebrate the Baqr-'Id, but there being no one present who could lead the worship, a Dacca youth, aged twenty, who was passing in a boat, had to land and recite the usual prayers.

Formerly the peasants respected Brahmins, and attended many Hindu ceremonials now prohibited; but the Farazí Maulavís have denounced the contribution of anything to the annual festivals, although unable to stop the payment of extra rent in place of the Párvaṇa, or impost, levied to defray the cost of religious ceremonies.

The peasant is not only litigious and very unreasonable when his interests are touched, but easily persuaded to join in combinations against his landlord, and in so doing often falls into the snare set by designing men. Industry and frugality are common virtues, and though the wife is treated as a slave, she is never ill-used, while towards his children much affection and indulgence are shown. Strangers being regarded with suspicion, a simple question rarely receives a straightforward answer. The most attractive feature in the character of the ryot is his hospitality and charity. The beggar always receives a copper, or if the meal be ready the poorest wretch is invited to partake of it, and on leaving dismissed with a blessing. The house may be small, but the vagrant finds shelter therein.

It is to this national weakness that Bengal owes the existence of so many sturdy mendicants, who, wandering from one hamlet to another, find some kind hand to feed and shelter them.

The Mussulmán is less sociable than the Hindu, and now that music has a ban laid upon it, he can no longer join in parties given by his Hindu neighbours. Boys of both creeds play together, and when grown up often become attached friends. It is not uncommon for the Muhammadan to share the joys and sorrows of his Hindu friend, and pay the compliment of naming a son after him.

One of the most characteristic foibles of the Bengali peasant is vanity, leading him to wear embroidered garments and caps, and carry what in his eyes is the modern emblem of gentility—a cotton umbrella!

On the whole the peasant is a happy and contented man, unless the plausible theories of the Maulavís induce him to join in agrarian disputes and combinations so common at the present day. Nothing will make him leave the home round which his affections cling, unless injustice and a long course of illegal exactions, by rendering life intolerable, forces him to seek for peace under a less extortionate landlord. The Churs, or alluvial islands, along the Ganges and Meghna, are the favourite retreats of Farazí ryots, and the lands being managed directly by Government, and not by any Zamíndár, or middleman, the arbitrary taxes sanctioned by the ancient custom of the country are no longer collected.

BAHURÚPIÁ.

The Bahurúpiá, or mimic, of Bengal is usually a Muhammadan, but any one possessing the talent acquires the name. The Bahurúpiá is properly a low caste Hindu, allied to the Bhánd, who, in most instances, has become a Muhammadan, tracing his descent from the great actor 'Umar-i-yár, the court jester of Noshírwán the Just.

The Bahurúpiás dance and sing in character, but only to the accompaniment of the drum (dhol) and cymbals (manjírá). By means of Gáb juice they pucker their faces, and, putting on a beard and moustaches, mimic the childish treble of extreme old age. A popular exhibition with Bengalís is called "Siv-Gaurí," for which the Bahurúpiá gets himself up with one side attired as Siv, the other as Gaurí, and imitates the different tones of voice, gait, and gestures of the two sexes with so much art as to deceive many of the audience.

The Bahurúpiá is not degraded, but eats and intermarries with the old Muhammadans, although he is an abomination in the eyes of the puritanical Farázís.

BÁJUNIA.

Musicians are regarded all over India as a debased race, and in Eastern Bengal Muhammadan musicians are either barbers (hajjám), or the husbands of midwives (dáí), classes ranked among the vilest of the population.

Bands (ṭáifá, da'fa) are composed of a varying number of players, the instruments being selected according to native ideas of harmony. The ordinary bands are—

1. Roshan-Chaukí, consisting of three "surnáe," or clarion players, a performer on the drum (dholak), and a fifth who makes a discordant noise with the jhánjh, or brass cymbals. This band is maintained by rich families to play at sunrise and sunset.

2. Naqárah. This company plays at each "pahar," or watch of the day. It is composed of seven musicians: three playing on the naqárah, or kettledrum, two on the clarion, one on a "karná," or snake-shaped trumpet, and one on a "damámá," or large-sized brass drum. The privilege of having the naqárah played before them was one of the highest ambition to the Amírs of the Mughal Court, being only granted to princes of the blood royal, and to a few of the highest dignitaries of the empire. At the present day only Nawábs and feudatories have the right

to possess a naqárah band; but rich Muhammadan householders not unfrequently keep one, and assume an honour for which they have no sanction.

3. Ṭáifa-dár. This is the musical party which attends nautch girls, who are always Muhammadans. It consists of two players on the violin (sárangí), two men who beat drums (tablá), and a player on the cymbals (manjírá). These men, the most respectable class of musicians, are called by the Sanskrit name Sapardá.

A band of Muhammadan musicians still popular in Dacca, where formerly several existed, is known as Zindah Sháh Ghází-ka-gáyan, who sing Hindustani and Bengali songs, in honour of Zindah Sháh, of interminable length, for which they receive two rupees each section, or canto.

At a performance the chief, Múl, or Díwán Çahib, plants an 'aça, or staff with a crescentic iron head, on a mound, while four players seat themselves around. The leader begins by strutting about waving a yák's tail, clashing the "manjírá," or cymbals, and singing of the redoubtable deeds "of the immortal warrior of the faith," while the players augment the discord by beating drums and clanging the "jhánjh," or Hindu cymbals.

The most despicable class of Muhammadan players, however, are the Hiṛjá, who personate women in their dress, and are generally believed, as their name imports, to be hermaphrodites. Their obscene songs, and lascivious movements, are regulated by the beating of a "dholak," by morris-bells (ghungrú) attached to the ankles of one of the performers, by cymbals, and by clapping of the hands (tálí).

Formerly the naqárah players were Chamárs, but of late years the lower grades of Muhammadans, always very bigoted Farázís, are exclusively employed, and are known as Bájunia. They are regarded so low in rank that no respectable man will marry into their families, or even eat with them.

BALDIYÁ.

In Bhágalpúr the Baldiyá is known as Ládú-bepárí.

The Baldiyás are Mussulmáns who keep pack-bullocks (balad) for the carriage of bricks, grain, and mortar, from those parts of the country where there are no cart roads. Bullocks, or bulls, are employed, and the Desh bullock being smaller, and more easily laden, is preferred. Ponies are never used by Muhammadans in Eastern Bengal; but Hindu Baldiyás, either Sáha, or Telí by caste, are found occasionally using them.

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The pack-saddle is called Palán, a Persian word; the saddle-bags Goṇi, the Sanskrit for a coarse cloth bag.

The Baldiyá will not castrate bulls, but engages the Gáí-ka-hajjám, generally an Áhír, to do so.

Owing to the increased number of carts wherever there are roads, the Baldiyá has much less work to do in cities than formerly; but still there are about forty families in Dacca. In the jungly tract of Bhowál their services are indispensable, cultivators, or agents, engaging them to transport grain from the inland villages where there are no roads to the nearest river. They charge from two or three rupees the hundred *mans;* but, if the village is difficult of access, four rupees. A tradition current in Dacca is, that the ancestors of the Baldiyás were Banjárás, brought there by the Muhammadan governors. This tradition receives confirmation from the fact that villagers still call the Baldiyá, Banjárá, although they have entirely relinquished the nomade habits of these wandering traders, and in physique have little in common with the lithe gipsy-like figures of the Central India Banjárá. In complexion, features, and muscular development, they are indistinguishable from the Mussulmáns around them.

The inland trade of Bengal was carried on last century by three classes of travelling merchants, the Bepárí, the Banjára, and the Lambáḍí, or Lambaries, as they were usually called, who transported merchandise on bullocks, and pursued their trade even in districts devastated by contending armies.

The Banjárá and Lambáḍí, being Hindus, regarded each other as kinsmen, and while traversing the country were under Government protection; but for greater security each band was accompanied by an old Bhát, or Cháran, woman. If plundered, or ill-treated, the guardian Bhát wounded herself in presence of the aggressors, a deed supposed to be followed by awful retribution. Their ranks were generally swollen by bands of conjurers, jugglers, and other vagrants, who sought protection with these privileged traders.

The Bepárí, again, was quite distinct. He was the trader of Bengal, engaged in transporting salt, corn, sugar, and other bulky goods from one part of the country to another.

BELDÁR.

In Hindustan this is a Hindu profession, but in Eastern Bengal it is exclusively a Muhammadan. In other parts of India menial work is performed by outcast Hindus; but in

Bengal any repulsive or offensive occupation devolves on the Muhammadan. The Beldár is to the Muhammadan village what the Bhúinmálí is to the Hindu, and it is not improbable that his ancestors belonged to this vile caste.

The Beldár acts as a scavenger in his own village, removing carcasses or cutting brushwood, and he is the torchbearer (Mash'alchí) at Hindu and Mussulman weddings, his only competitor in this occupation being the Bhúinmálí.

BHAṬIÁRÁ.

The Bhaṭiárá is either an eating-house keeper, or an innkeeper; in the former capacity selling bread, eggs, rice, and "kabáb," or balls of meat roasted on skewers, and contracting to feed strangers for a certain period, and at a fixed rate, usually three anas ($4\frac{1}{2}d.$) for two meals daily; while in the latter he is a far more important individual. He keeps a Musáfir-khánah, (lit., traveller's abode), or Bhaṭiár-khánah, where travellers are housed and fed. There are no Saráes in Eastern Bengal at the present day, and the Kaṭras, originally built for the accommodation of travellers, have been converted to other uses. These innkeepers feed travellers for three anas a day, and on paying one paisa additional they receive a mat and are allowed to sleep on the ground in a corner of a thatched hut. The bill of fare provided by the Bhaṭiárá is limited to rice, bread, fish, or meat, curried (sálan), and a richly-seasoned stew, known as "do-piyáza." These inns are shunned by many because, in case of sudden death, the bodies of travellers are handed over to the police and buried by the Dôms. Should the wayfarer, therefore, be poor and friendless, he prefers going to one of the charitable Musáfir-khánas, supported by rich Muhammadans, where he will be housed and fed gratis for three days, and in the event of death his body will receive decent burial.

Under native rule the cook of the Saráe was also the porter, being known as Baqqál, a term now applied to a pedlar.

Of late years enterprising Hindus have opened hotels for their countrymen, but the poorer classes are still entertained in the Modí's, or grocer's, shop.

BIDRÍ-SÁZ.

The name Bidrí is derived from Bídar, the ancient capital of the Báhmaní Sultáns of the Dakhin, formerly noted for its manufactories of this metal. Dr. B. Heyne visited Bídar early this century, and has given the following description of its preparation.[1] The ware, he says, contains twenty-four parts of tin and one of copper, joined together by fusion. Its distinctive colour was given by taking and rubbing the metal with equal parts of muriate of ammonia and nitre earth, when a lasting black colour was instantaneously impressed, which, becoming tarnished, could be restored by friction with oil or butter.

The preparation and subsequent staining of this alloy in Dacca materially differ from the above, and from that given by Buchanan in his account of Puràniya.[2]

The Dacca workman takes one sér of Jastá (zinc), three chhaṭáks of copper and of lead, one and a half chhaṭáks of tin, and one kachchá of cast-iron, puts them into a mud crucible (ghaṛiyá). He introduces this into the centre of a charcoal fire kept in a bright glow, and when the outside of the crucible cracks, he is warned that the metals are fused. The liquid mass is then poured into a mould of the desired shape, the surface being smoothed with a file, while with a sharp-pointed burin, or style, the pattern is engraved. Silver is often inlaid on Bidrí in the following clumsy way. Thin silver foil being hammered into the grooves, it is firmly imbedded with a blunt iron implement. The surface is then polished with lamb's wool and oil, any excess of oil being got rid of with the ashes of cowdung.

Bidrí is blackened with a preparation composed of one Tola (180 grs.) of muriate of ammonia, one-quarter Tola of alum and of iron, and one-third Tola of sulphate of copper. A solution is applied to the heated Bidrí, and on drying the metal is rubbed with a rag.

The Bidrí-Sáz of Dacca preserve a tradition that they originally came from Purneah. They are always Muhammadans, manufacturing at the present day, huqqá-stands, bedposts, basins, vessels to contain pân, and water-goglets (çuráhí).

CHAMRA-FAROSH.

The trade in hides is one of the most flourishing of the present day, the traders belonging to the strictest sect of

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[1] An account of the Biddery ware in India, in "Annals of Philosophy" for October, 1813, vol. ii, 260.

[2] Vol. iii, 320, 321.

Muhammadanism, and generally to the Kúṭí subdivision, which is either Farazí or Wahábbí in religion. When work is slack the hide dealer is found working as a mason, or water-carrier.

It is alleged that no Hindu capitalist will advance money for such an unhallowed trade, but the Chamṛa-farosh finds no difficulty in obtaining money from the Sáha banker, with whom he generally arranges to divide the profit in equal proportions. The term interest (súd) is an abomination to the Farazí; but he dearly loves it when called "Manáfi'," or profit. Confidence in each other's probity is a surprising trait in the character of the natives of Eastern Bengal, who, without any security, and merely on the promissory note of the borrower, lend money, and very rarely indeed are they defrauded.

Having received his advance, the hide merchant sends agents into the country to buy old and diseased cattle for slaughter, as well as the hides of animals skinned and dried by the village Ṛishí. The Chamṛa-farosh soaks hides in water, scrubbing them with "Jháma," or burnt brick, and rubbing in a little impure alkali (Kharí-namak), when they are ready for the market. The skin of a slaughtered animal (halálí) is more valuable than that of one which has died of disease (murdárí), the former fetching about forty-four anas in the villages, and from forty-eight to fifty-two anas in Dacca, while the latter is bought for forty to forty-two anas in the country, and for forty-eight in the town. The "halálí" is recognised by its having no bare patches on the back. The carcasses of animals dying in villages are always dragged to the outskirts: hence it happens that the "murdárí" bears along the spine patches where the hair is rubbed off, and which lessen the value of the skin.

Last century Dacca was a celebrated mart for the sale of otter skins, agents being met with in most villages along the foot of the hills which bound the north-eastern frontier of Bengal; but at present the trade is extinct, although otters are still numerous in all the rivers that issue from the hills. The demand for these furs in China and Tibet has ceased, owing probably to the introduction of cotton and woollen goods, or to some change of fashion in these countries.

CHANDÚ-WÁLAH.

The infamy of having introduced this demoralising vice into Eastern Bengal attaches to one Sonáullah of Ruknpúr, in the city of Dacca, who, about 1830, brought a Chinaman from Calcutta and opened an opium shop in the city. The vice at once captivated the sensual Muhammadans, and within twenty years as many as twenty-two shops were opened, but at present, owing to the heavy licensing tax, the number is reduced to eleven.

The Chandú-wálah is always a Mussulmán, but the shop is often leased by a Hindu Sáha whose respectability would suffer if he personally superintended the smoking. Throughout the Eastern districts of Mymensingh, Tipperah, and Báqirganj, the vice is slowly but steadily spreading; while in Silhet, where opium-eating is as much indulged in as in Assam, Chandú-smoking has been adopted in earnest, and is now more general than in any of the other districts.

Chandú-smoking is the same as the opium-smoking of China, and the word Chandú[1] is the one in common use in the Malay Archipelago.

Crude opium cannot be smoked on account of its irritating quality and nauseous flavour: consequently at Singapore the extract is prepared with extreme care, but in Bengal less trouble is taken.

To prepare Chandú the Dacca manufacturer takes opium and mixes it with the refuse—"maíl" or "inchí"—which collects in the opium pipe, in the proportion of one "bharí," or a rupee weight, of the former to twelve anas of the latter. Water is added, and heat being gradually applied, the mixture is kept constantly stirred. As soon as the infusion is ready it is strained through a piece of fine muslin, then put a second time into a pan, and evaporated, until the mass becomes of the consistence of glue, or treacle. The Chandú-wálah places different quantities of this prepared opium in little cups made of palm-leaves, and arranges them against the arrival of his customers.

When the smoker enters the dark and dirty hut, he lies down on a mat, resting his head on a very greasy pillow; and, as it is essential that all distracting noises be shut out, and the smoker allowed to enjoy the "khiyál," or ecstasy, so much valued by the habitué, the hut is situated in a narrow and unsavoury lane, where individuals can enter unobserved. The interior of the room is usually darkened, and the prostrate figures are indistinctly seen by the light of several shaded oil-lamps placed on the floor.

Having bought his opium, the smoker takes an iron wire, called "thuk," and fixes on it the Chandú pellet (chíta), then drawing one of the lamps towards him, heats the opium in the flame and kneads it in the palm-leaf cup held in his left hand. After heating and kneading the opium several times it is ready for use, and is put into a china bowl fixed on the side of a Bamboo tube, a little over a foot in length, which is imported from China, being identical with the opium pipe of that country. The contents are then applied to the flame, and the smoker rapidly inhales the fumes, never drawing breath until all the opium is consumed, when, like the Gánjha smoker, he expels the smoke slowly and reluctantly. Three "chítás," costing one paisa, will intoxicate a beginner, but habitués will finish five, or even more, without any effect beyond flushing the face, brightening the eyes, and causing a pleasing ecstacy. Unless the pipe is kept constantly clean by means of a pricker, called "gillí," the refuse accumulates and produces dryness and burning of the throat.

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[1] Chandú, prepared opium for smoking.—Crawford, "Malay Dictionary."

According to Mr. Little,[1] Chandú-smoking causes at first nervous excitement, sleeplessness, and increase of the sexual passion; but when indulged in to excess is followed by dyspepsia, bowel-complaints, functional derangements of the heart, dysuria, often ending in albuminuria, carbuncles, and intractable ulcerations. Among the Chinese, whose vital power has been reduced by constant intoxication, remittent fevers are very common, and very obstinate. The Bengali smoker, however, alleges that no injurious effects are produced as long as he lives on milk, butter, and sweetmeats. Muhammadan physicians, on the other hand, consider opium a "damágh-ka-nashá," or brain stimulant, and recommend it as an invigorating and tonic medicine in suitable doses.

Chandú is said to be an aphrodisiac, but when indulged in to excess, or when nutritious food is not taken at the same time, impotency often ensues. If regularly smoked it is a preservative against malarious fevers and colds; but when deprived of his daily allowance, the smoker becomes irritable, hypochondriacal, and very subject to diarrhœa.

Chandú-smoking among Chinese women tends to cause sterility, or miscarriages. In Bengal Chandú is smoked by prostitutes for its aphrodisiac properties, and of late years they have become such inveterate smokers that it is notorious no woman who has once tasted the delights of opium ever gives it up.

Gánjha-smoking is as peculiarly a Hindu vice as Chandú-smoking is a Muhammadan. Hindus of the lower castes occasionally visit the opium shop, but form a very small proportion of the smokers. The idle and dissolute Mussulmáns of old and embarrassed families, brought up in the midst of a licentious population, without any education or healthy incentive to exertion, are the chief smokers; and it is of daily occurrence to find the head of a house an inveterate smoker, miserable until his spirits have been elevated by his favourite drug. It is not unusual for Muhammadans to excuse their intemperate habits on the ground of prolonging their lives. Throughout the East it is a popular belief that on the birth of each human being the angel Jabra'il writes on the forehead the number of inspirations allotted to him. By diminishing their frequency (ḥabs-i-dam), which can be most effectually done by opium, life will be prolonged, and they instance Sháh Madár, who was an adept at holding his breath, and lived to the patriarchal age of three hundred and ninety-five years.

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[1] On Chandú-smoking at Singapore, see an exhaustive paper by Mr. R. Little, in vol. ii, No. 1, of the "Journal of the Indian Archipelago" for 1848.

CHAUNRÍ-WÁLAH

Is a Muhammadan who makes fly-flaps and besoms with strips of Date palm-leaves, the former used by syces, the latter by domestic servants. Bráhmans, however, dust the ground before their idols with the tail of a Ban-gáe,[1] or Yak, and a Chaunrí of this is also borne at the Muharram by the boy called Imám-ka-Páik.

CHHAPAR-BAND.

Chayál.

In Dacca the trade of making bamboo frameworks for thatched roofs is carried on by Muhammadans of the most advanced Farází persuasion; but in villages Chaṇḍáls, or any person skilled in the work, follow it.

Bamboos before being used are always steeped in water to harden them against the attacks of white ants, and several varieties are selected according to the particular requirement. "Tulda" bamboo (Bambusa tulda) is good for Ja'farí, or lattice-work; "Ora" for the framework of the roof; and "Barák" for uprights. Houses in Bengal of the ordinary curvilinear form are covered with two chhapars, and the hut is called an "Alang." A four-sided pointed roof is known as "Chau-chála," in Bihár "Chautarká;" one with four verandahs in addition an "Ath-chála;" while two chhapars with an extension in front, covering a verandah, a "tai-chála."

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[1] Vana-gava, Bos Gavaeus, or wild ox.

The chhapar-band is often, though not necessarily, a thatcher, or "gharámí." Thatching grass is bought from Chaṇḍáls, and in May, when it is in season, the annual fires occur, causing much loss to the citizens, but improving the sanitary state of the bazárs and villages, which are usually referred to thatchers discontented with the dull trade, and, if correct, verifying the description given of them fifty-eight years ago. Mr. Walter Hamilton, writing in 1820 of the Dacca workmen, says: "The thatched houses being of very combustible materials are generally burned down once, if not twice, per annum, and are viewed while burning by their owners with an apathy truly Asiatic. Into large earthen pots, sunk in the ground, they throw the few valuables they possess, and mats, thatch, and bamboos being plenty, the expenditure of a few rupees restores their edifice to all its original splendour. These fires generally originate with the owners of house-building materials (chhapar-bands and gharámís), and when a fleet of boats loaded with them arrives, a conflagration may be expected to ensure a ready sale."[1]

CHHÍPÍ-GAR

Is a cotton-printer, who stamps patterns on embroidered muslins, known in the trade as "kashída," and "chikan."

The dye used in stamping is called "pachá-pathar," or "Deo-maṭí," a red-ochre earth from Upper India.

Leí-chhapa employs other workmen. Paste, or glue, is heated and smeared over the stamp with which the design is impressed on the cloth.

The men who follow these occupations would consider themselves degraded if they traced patterns on silk, which is exclusively the work of women.

CHIKAN-DOZ.

They are Muhammadan embroiderers of muslin, who work with gold, or silver, thread (Kalábattun), as well as with cotton and silk, and make the beautifully ornamented caps worn by rich Mussulmáns. The Chikan-doz is usually a workman, but a few, having saved money, are wholesale dealers. Not having the same scruples as the Rafúgar about instructing their daughters' children, they freely teach all desirous of learning the art.

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[1] "A Geographical, Statistical, and Historical Description of Hindostan," vol. i, 186.

Ustágar is the polite term by which to address a member of this class. Ustágarní is the title of the female, not necessarily the wife of an embroiderer, who gives out kashída cloth to be worked in private houses, there being few Muhammadan families of respectability the females of which do not spend much of their leisure in embroidering handkerchiefs for export to Arabia and the Persian Gulf.[1]

CHÍRÁ-KASH.

Individuals belonging to the Káyasth, Sonár, Tántí, and Sáha castes, but chiefly Muhammadans, earn a livelihood by engraving on gold, silver, or copper in the following manner. A plate, or salver, being fixed to a bench with wax, the pattern is traced with a sharp style and afterwards cut out with a chisel. The Chírá-Kash also make patterns in relief by the crude method of placing wooden blocks underneath, and beating the thin metal on them.

CHÚṚÍWÁLAH.

This Muhammadan trade is quite distinct from that of the Hindu Kácharu, the former manufacturing glass bracelets of different colours, and ornamenting them with tinfoil, while the latter only works in lac.

Glass in crude lumps (thakká) is imported from Cawnpore, and is either of a dull white or of a pale green colour. Various tints are given to it by the Chúrí-wálah. By mixing lead and tin a yellow colour is obtained; with a salt of copper, called "chhíp," imported from Nepaul, a sky blue (ásmání) is formed; with sulphate of copper a deep green; with a mixture of lead and zinc, or pewter (jastá), and tin, a deep red.

Glass bracelets are made in the following way. The furnace (bhaṭhí), partially sunk in the ground with a wood fire underneath, contains a large crucible which, being of smaller diameter than the furnace, allows the flame to ascend and heat the trays arranged around. There are six openings into the furnace, and opposite each a workman sits, while the implements at hand are a "saláka," or iron-pointed rod, with which the molten material is extracted, and a spear-shaped piece of iron, called "málá," with which the glass is fashioned into a circular band. At this stage the material is again heated, and, with a thin iron rod (patkar), the band is transformed into a narrow ring, which, being placed on an earthen cone (sarkandí, or sánchá), the proper size is given to the bracelet.

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[1] Mrs. Kindersley, writing from Allahabad in 1768, says: "The finest filigrane (an old name for this embroidery) is made at Dacca. This is work which requires great delicacy and patience; it is not perforated like the filigrane made in Europe, but the gold or silver thread is cut into long pieces like fine threads." Letters, &c., p. 241. (London, 1777.)

These artizans know nothing of the art of annealing, consequently when the bracelet is finished it is placed on the ground at the side of the furnace and allowed to cool gradually.

A skilful workman will turn out a thousand bracelets a day; but an unskilful about half that number only. In Dacca these bracelets are in great demand, the market price being two anas (*3d.*) a hundred; but in Hindustan eight hundred are bought for that sum.

Another branch of this trade is ornamenting the bracelets with tin-foil. Lac is smeared along the circumference of the glass circle, and the foil, often of a golden colour, is stuck on. Bracelets ornamented in this manner and sold for five anas a hundred, are generally worn by Muhammadan females of the lower ranks, as shell-bracelets, the correct wrist decoration of Hindu females, cannot be put on by them.

DAFA'DÁR.

This name, properly given to a sergeant of police, is in Eastern Bengal the designation of a low class of Mussulmáns who, chiefly found along the banks of the Hilsámárí river, are also known as "Nalwah" from using the Nal grass in the manufacture of baskets.

They are undoubtedly an offshoot from the Hajjám division, and having adopted a new occupation, as a natural consequence, claim a higher position than the parent stock. The Hajjáms eat with the Dafa'dárs, but the Dafa'dárs decline to deal with the Hajjáms on a footing of equality.

The men and women make rice bins and coarse mats, called "chaṭáí," with Nal grass, brought from the Sunderbuns by themselves, or by traders.

Though a despised community they do not permit their women to appear in public, and still cling, uninfluenced by the preaching of the modern doctors, to their old ancestral beliefs and customs.

Their headman is styled Mu'tabar, but he does not receive, as is usual, a present of a turban at weddings. Furthermore, an annual subscription to the Pancháít is not levied, but the Mullá gets a fee at weddings and funerals.

DÁÍ.

This word is often counfounded with the Sanskrit "Dháí," a wet nurse. In Eastern Bengal, Dháí is a midwife, the "dudh-piláí" being a wet nurse.

Midwives are generally Muhammadans, but if Hindus they belong to the Chamár caste. No respectable Hindu will cut the navel-cord, and a common term of abuse applied to a midwife is "Nár-Káṭa," or one who cuts the cord.

The male relatives of these women are usually tailors or musicians; while in villages they often work as weavers. There is always great jealousy between them and the barbers and professional musicians, as, though equally degraded, each claims a superiority over the other.

In Dacca the midwives are invariably ignorant and generally consequential, while, being few in number, they are very independent, extorting money in proportion to the anxieties of their patients. A midwife forms an important part of a household, and no family of note is without one. Like the Purohit and barber, the Dáí is a privileged person, and has freedom of access to the female apartments at any hour. Her post is usually hereditary, but, if childless, the Dáí adopts a young woman and educates her in the mysteries of the profession. Muhammadan ladies have no objection to be attended by a Hindu or Christian woman, but one of their own creed is preferred. The poorer classes attend on each other, and only in cases of difficulty is the European doctor, or the professional *accoucheuse,* called in. Parturition is in most instances easy, and the poor have seldom any need of skilled attendance; but among the listless inmates of Zanánas, who never lead a healthy or invigorating life, labour is often tedious and exhausting.

When a woman, either Hindu or Muhammadan, approaches the term of her pregnancy, an outhouse, or detached room, is prepared for her to which, when labour begins, she retires with the Dáí and a servant. This den, to which the highest, as well as the lowest, is condemned, is known as the *Asaucha-ghar,* or *Chhaṭhí-ghar.* The duty of the midwife is to rub and roll about the patient so as to increase the pains, and when the child is born to cut the cord with a piece of bamboo (tarlá-ka-chhalti), and to give immediate warning for the "Azán," or call to prayers.

Of the mechanism of parturition, of the dangers to be avoided and provided against, midwives are profoundly ignorant; a woman being satisfied if she is attended by the family Dáí, or by the pupil of the Dáí, who aided her mother, or sister, under similar circumstances. Being obliged to observe many customs, without the due performance of which her own, and her child's life, would be endangered, the mother resigns herself to the hands of the midwife assured that all will go well.

The midwife is expected to pay frequent visits until all danger has passed; but should the lady be rich, she is not allowed to leave the house for days. It devolves on her to anoint the infant daily, for in India babies are never bathed. Lampblack must be smeared along the eyelashes, and a mash of warm aromatics (ghuṭṭí) given daily. For two days after birth the mother is only allowed to take turmeric, molasses, and infusion of Ajwain, while on the third, and up to the fortieth day, she may eat pulse (masúr) and rice.

After the birth of a child many strange rites are performed. A bonfire (aláwa) is kept smouldering at the door of the Chhaṭhí-ghar for six days in the hot, for twenty-one in the cold, season, and an oil lamp, placed within the room, must never be permitted to go out, an attendant being always on the watch to trim it, as darkness favours the entrance of evil spirits. A horse-shoe is placed beneath the bedding, as iron is most distasteful to all kinds of devils; and an earthen vessel, on which the name of God is written, is hung over the door. No one can leave the room before midday, and on no account must the baby's clothes be washed, or dried, anywhere but inside the room. If the husband, or doctor, has to visit the mother his clothes are fumigated with the smoke of mustard seed thrown on the fire, and when the visitor leaves, any food, milk, or drinking water, standing in the room must be flung away. For six days the Hindu mother is confined in this den, her Muhammadan sister remaining for ten.

The evil spirit, "Umm-us-sibiyán," literally the mother of children, is chiefly feared by the Mussulmáns, being believed to cause convulsions, for the cure of which the "Ojhá," or wizard, is summoned, and should recovery ensue he is credited with effecting it. Up to the age of eighteen months this terrible demon has to be kept at bay, after which she is considered to be powerless.

On the sixth, or Chhaṭhí day, the barber and washerman are sent for; the former cutting the hair, and paring the nails, of the infant; the latter taking away the puerperal garments. It is from performing this menial work that the Dhobí belongs to a very unclean class.

On the twenty-first, or ikkísí day, the barber and washerman again attend, when similar duties are discharged.

On the fortieth day after the birth of a boy, impurity ceases, as among the Jews, but several rites must be first of all performed. There is the "Kua-Jhánkna," or peeping into the well, which is identical with the worship of Subháchaní among Hindus, after which the mother resumes her household duties.

If a child be stillborn the mother is given an infusion of Bamboo leaves in which a copper coin has been soaked. The draught is believed to decompose the poison which caused the death of the child. Should a woman give birth to several stillborn children in succession, the popular belief is, that the same child reappears on each occasion, when, to frustrate the designs of the evil spirit that has taken possession of the child, the nose, or a portion of an ear, is cut off, and the body is cast away on a dunghill.

Dáís have many secret remedies which they puff with unblushing assurance. Several are innocuous, a few useful, but in all cases they consist of so many and such heterogeneous substances that their action must be extremely doubtful. Their favorite remedy is called Mastúrí, or Battísá, from its being composed of thirty two ingredients. Among other things it contains syrup, galls, litharge, sandal-wood, rock salt, and *gokhrú* (*Tribulus lanuginosus*), and is applied on balls of cotton soaked in Champá oil in all diseases peculiar to women.

DARWESH.

The foundation of the various Darwesh orders is referred to the early days after Muhammad, and, if tradition is to be believed, earnest men united by a common tie, and worshipping God according to certain formulæ, were countenanced by Abú Bakr and 'Alí. Before the birth of Muhammad, however, the mystical doctrines of the Çufís, tinged by the philosophy of the Hindus, penetrated the religious ranks of the East, and inspired Uwais Karaní, in the thirty-seventh year of the Hijra (A.D. 657), to withdraw from the world, and found the first fraternity of mendicants. Imitating his example Abú Bakr and 'Alí organised two similar orders, and entrusted their management to Khalífas, or successors. From these congregations have sprung all the Darwesh orders of the present day; the Bistámís, Naqshbandís, and Biktashís being offshoots from the parent society of Abú Bakr, and the remaining houses from that of 'Alí. Hammer fixes the number of Darwesh orders at thirty-six, and mentions that only twelve existed before the foundation of the Ottoman Empire in 1298, while the rest were established between the beginning of the fourteenth and the middle of the eighteenth century.

In Southern India Faqírs belong to one or other of fourteen households (Khánawádas); but several of the largest, and most popular, orders of Persia and Turkey are unrepresented. In Hindustan, however, various lists are given. Wilson in his Glossary enumerates ten classes:—

Qádiría.
Chishtía.
Shaṭṭaría.
Madáría.
Rafáí.
Jalálía.
Sohágía.
Naqshbandía.
Malang.
Báwá pyárí Ka faqírán.

Mr. Blochmann, again, divides the Indian Darwesh orders into four greater and six inferior, as follows:—

Qádiría.
Chishtía.
Naqshbandía.
Suhrawardía.

Shiblía.
Madária.
Shaṭṭaría.
Zindah fili.
Kashmírí Rishís.
Majzúbí.

In Eastern Bengal, however, only representatives of the Qádiría, Chishtía, Rafáí, Madáría, and Naqshbandía are met with; while of late years no Sohágia has appeared.

The ordinary distinction between one class of Faqír and another is popularly made to depend on the observance, or otherwise, of the Shara', or precepts of the Muhammadan religion. The Bá-Shara', or Sálik, by far the most respected, regulate their lives in accordance with the rules of Muhammadanism, while the Be-Shara', or Majzúb, follow their own appetites and passions, eating and drinking whatever they fancy, and leading disreputable and scandalous lives. Many of them are poor demented creatures, like the Abdáls of Syria, who wander about nearly naked, justifying their indecency by the text of the Koran, "the clothing of piety is better than apparel and fine garments."

The Sálik are usually married men of settled habits; the Majzúb are homeless beggars, who wander all over India dependent on the charity of the benevolent, and universally credited with supernatural powers. The former initiate disciples (muríd); the latter rarely do so.

The Darwesh orders resemble in many obvious respects the fraternities of the Roman Catholic Church, the main difference between them and the rest of the people consisting in a strict observance of certain religious rites peculiar to themselves, and not in any cardinal diversity of belief. Taçawwuf, or the mysticism of the Çufís, does not embody any philosophical or religious system, but is identical with the rule of a monastic order. Each Darwesh society has a rule of its own, comprising some simple, and many obscure, formulæ; while all acknowledge Muhammad as the prophet, and the Koran as the handwriting of God. Contrary to the opinion of the 'Ullamá, Darweshes believe that many texts of the Koran have a mystical as well as an obvious meaning, and maintain that the distinctive tenets of the various orders are based on texts only understood by a privileged few. The Hadís, or traditionary precepts of Muhammad, and the commentaries of the four great Doctors, are also admitted to be unerring, and binding on all believers. The peculiar religious doctrines of Çufís are still hidden from us, and the minute shades of difference separating one from the other have not been determined. Darweshes, however, concur in believing that God is the only object of contemplation, and that the highest truths can only be mastered by rapturous abstraction, or by falling into a trance, when the outer world of perception passes away and the soul enters into the unseen and spiritual world. The Eastern mystics derived many of their peculiar conceptions from the Greek Plotinus, the Egyptian Aristotle, as they call him, who asserted that being and knowledge were identical. Çufís, therefore, maintain that to know the Divine Intelligence it is necessary to become that Divine Intelligence; and as the soul is an emanation from God, a ray of His ineffable brightness, it must lose its personality, becoming absorbed, during the ecstatic state, into the Divine Essence. The Spanish Quietists asserted that the soul became purified, and prepared for reabsorption, by prolonged austerity; but the Çufís regard the soul as the slave of the will, being at pleasure constrained to unite with the Great Spirit. By constant meditation, therefore, on the attributes and beneficence of God, and by renunciation of the world and its temptations, the Darwesh acquires Ma'rifat, or knowledge of Him.

It is the privilege of only a very few to gain this knowledge, but, through the mercy of God, holy men have from time to time appeared to guide mankind towards salvation by pointing out the path (Ṭaríq) leading to perfect knowledge. Each messenger has indicated a new route; but all tend towards the same goal. According to some authorities there are always forty saints (Chhihal tanán) with one chief, or Quṭb, living, round whom the whole Muhammadan world revolves. Several of these Quṭbs have established orders; but others have merely revived and reformed those already existing.

(*a*) Chishtía.

The founder of this Indian Darwesh order, Khwájah Mu'inuddín, son of Ghiyásuddín, a Sayyid of the house of Husain, was born at Chisht, a village of Sístán, in A.H. 537 (1142). When fifteen years old his father died, but his education was directed by Ibráhim Kandozí, a celebrated doctor, by Khwájah 'Usman ,and finally by the great 'Abd-ul-Qádir Gílání. According to the author of the Qánoon-i-Islám, it was a certain Shaikh Abú Isháq Chishtí who organised the fraternity; but it is generally admitted that Mu'inuddín followed Shahábuddín Ghorí in his invasion of India, A.D. 1193, and settled at Ajmír in a ruined temple sacred to Mahádeo. It is popularly believed that the saint was in the daily habit of filling a water-skin (mashk) and hanging it on a bough. The water drops fell upon a "lingam" hidden beneath leaves and rubbish, and this, although quite accidental, so pleased Mahádeo that he conferred on the saint many miraculous powers. Hence it is that Hindus, as well as Muhammadans, make votive offerings at his tomb, especially in the month of October. Mu'inuddín died on Saturday, the 6th of Rajab, A.H. 636 (1238), and ever since Ajmír has been known as Dár-ul-Khair, the abode of goodness.

The Ajmír shrine has always been greatly favoured by the Muhammadan rulers of India, and Mu'inuddín became the patron saint of the Mughal dynasty. In 1544 it was visited by Sher Sháh. In 1570, five months after the birth of Jahángír, Akbar walked to Ajmír on foot from Agra, a distance of two hundred miles, in fulfilment of a vow. In 1613, Jahángír caused a brass kettle to be made at the shrine for cooking food for five thousand pilgrims. In 1614, he attributed his recovery from a violent fever to the intercession of the saint, and, as a token of gratitude and humility, had his ears bored. In 1616, when at Ajmír, he enclosed the tomb with a gold railing of pierced work, costing 1,12,000 rupees. In 1628, Sháh Jahán, on his way to Agra, prostrated himself before it. In the wars which followed on the death of Aurangzíb, the shrine was pillaged and destroyed, but Madhají and Daulat Ráo Scindiah erected the present plain building over the tomb.

The next celebrated member of this order was Makhdúm

Sayyid Muhammad Banda-nawáz, Gesu-daraz, or the long-haired, who resided at the courts of Fíruz and Ahmad I, of the Bahmaní dynasty, towards the end of the fourteenth, and beginning of the fifteenth centuries. His tomb is at Gulbarga in the Dakhin, and his 'Urs is held on the 16th of the month Zí-qa'da.

Before the reign of Akbar, Shaikh Músá, a descendant of Shaikh Faríd-i-Shakarganj, resided at Sikri, where his wife bore several sons, the second being Shaikh Salím Chishtí, whose life is so intimately connected with that of Akbar's family. The date of his birth is not given, but he was at the height of his fame about 1569, when he foretold the birth of Prince Salím, the future Jahángír. The Shaikh was married, and of several sons distinguished as soldiers, the most famous was Shaikh Ahmad, who became a Mançubdár of five hundred at the court of Akbar.[1] Shaikh Salím died A.H. 979 (1571), and was buried at Fathpúr Sikrí in a tomb which has been described "as a perfect gem of art, elaborately executed in white marble of the purest hue, and the most delicate sculpture."[2] At the present day it is resorted to by thousands; and barren women, both Hindus and Muhammadans, tie pieces of string on the marble lattice work, in confident hope that they will conceive through the intercession of the saint.

Other followers of this order have earned lasting renown. At Agra is the tomb of Shaikh Ishmáíl Chishtí Akbarábádí, who died A.D. 1655, leaving a great name for sanctity. Sayyid Sháh Zuhúr, who built a small earthen monastery at Allahábád, which still exists, is also renowned for the miraculous cures effected during his lifetime, and vows paid at his tomb are rewarded at the present day by restoration to health.

A few members of this Darwesh order are always to be found in Eastern Bengal, and one of them has resided for many years in the tomb of Sháh Jalál Dakhiní at Dacca; but the head of the fraternity, known as Sar-guroh, or Sajjáda-nishín, always resides at Ajmír.

The Chishtía Faqírs, generally Shías, are very illiterate, and unable to read Arabic or Persian.

As a rule they are married men, who freely indulge in opium eating, but do not use Bháng, or other intoxicating drugs. Like many religious mendicants, Hindu and Muhammadan, they carry a large sea cocoa-nut (*Lodoicea Sechellarum*), called a Kishtí, into which they receive alms of food and money. Around the neck are hung three necklaces of glass beads known as Kanṭhá, Zanár, and Tasbíh, the last the rosary, consisting of a hundred and one beads. It is incumbent on each Faqír to recite the confession of faith (Kalmá) five times daily for each bead, and during the first watch of the night ('ishá-namáz), he must spend several hours in repeating texts of the Koran, and in counting his beads. On the right arm an amulet is bound, within which is contained a slip of paper on which is written the Súra Yá Sin,[1] or heart of the Koran, as Muhammad called it.

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[1] For further particulars of the family, *see* Blochmann's "Ain-i-Akbarí."

[2] Roberts (E.) "Hindostan," ii, 5.

Music, either instrumental or vocal, forms an essential part of their religious services, it having been observed by Mu'inuddín that singing was the food and support of the soul. When in a state of abstraction, or animated by religious fervour, the Chishtía Faqírs break forth into loud and excited singing, and throw themselves into strange attitudes, hanging by their feet from trees, or arching their bodies backwards till the head touches the ground, and mistaking, as Gibbon has it, "the giddiness of the head for the illumination of the spirit."

These Faqírs eat and drink in any respectable house, and partake as readily of food cooked by a Hindu, or Christian, as by a Muhammadan.

(b) QÁDIRÍA.

Throughout the Muhammadan world, from the shores of the Atlantic to the confines of China, the great Darwesh 'Abd-ul-Qádir Gílání is venerated as the first of spiritual teachers, and invoked in all seasons of danger, or tribulation. The following are a few among many titles indicating his superiority over all other saints, Píran-i-Pír, Pír-i-dastgír, Ghauṣ-ul-'Azím, and Ghauṣ-ul-Çamadání.

Sayyid 'Abd-ul-Qádir was born in Gílán, a province of Irán, in A.H. 471 (1078), and while still an infant, by refusing to taste milk during the fast of Ramazán, he foretold his sacred mission. When seventeen years of age he went to Bághdad, and in A.H. 521 (1127) began public lectures. He was appointed guardian of the tomb of the Imán 'Azam abú Hanífah, who died in prison A.H. 150 (767). The date of his death is uncertain, but most authorities fix it in A.H. 561 (1165). His body was interred in a suburb of the city, and around it so many saints have been entombed that Bághdad has acquired the name of Burj-al-auliyá, or citadel of saints. The tomb of 'Abd-ul-Qádir is one of the most handsome buildings in modern Bághdad, being surmounted by a lofty dome, and enclosed in a garden watered by means of an aqueduct leading from the Tigris. The court is divided into a vast number of small cells, tenanted by Faqírs, and the shrine is so richly endowed that about three hundred mendicants are fed daily.[1] The inhabitants of Bághdad regard 'Abd-ul-Qádir as their patron saint, and call upon him on all occasions of peril, or affliction, by land or water.

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[1] So named from the thirty-sixth Súra, which begins with these two letters. This chapter is so highly valued, that Muhammadans learn it by heart, and have it read to dying persons when *in articulo*.

Qádiría Faqírs are met with in all parts of the East, and in Egypt often earn a livelihood as fishermen. Their banners and turbans are properly white, but in India their dress is either green or white, while many prefer the red ochre dye, distinctive of Hindu Bairágís, for staining their coarse sleeveless tunic, known as "Ázád-be-nawá." In Bengal Qádiría Faqírs are always married, their sons being initiated as soon as they come of age. The Urs, or annual festival, of the saint, is observed on the eleventh Rabiâ-us-sání.

The rites attending the admission of a disciple are symbolical of those observed after the death of a Muhammadan. The pupil being stripped and shaved, seven jars of water are poured over him, and as each jar is emptied the Kalmá, or confession of faith, is repeated four times. A Kafan, or "Allah Nabí ka dalq," the peculiar dress of mendicants, and a red, black, or blue collar (girebán) of a singular pattern are put on him. A real Qádiría is recognised by this collar, which is worked by the Faqírs themselves, and composed of a certain number of stitches sewn in squares, never in curves. Should the stitches be too few, or too many, the impostor is unmasked, and is liable to have it snatched away by the true Faqír.

The novice finally receives a necklace (kanṭhá) as well as a rosary (tasbíh), and in return is expected, but not obliged, to pay a fee varying from four to ten rupees.

Qádiría Faqírs accept money and uncooked food from Hindus, and eat with most classes of Muhammadans, although they despise and ill-treat the Bediyá and other Muhammadans of doubtful orthodoxy.

They never sell amulets to ward off disease, as other mendicants do, nor claim the possession of power to exorcise spirits; yet the public credit them as well as all religious mendicants with this faculty.

The wives of the Bengal Qádiría never join their husbands in perambulating the city, but, attending to their household duties, earn a little by embroidering muslins.

(c) NAQSHBANDÍ.

This is one of the most widely dispersed, and most respectable, of Indian Darwesh orders. Followers of this "path" are very common in Hindustan, while in Bukhárá and Central

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[1] "Geographical Memoir of the Persian Empire," by J. M. Kinneir, p. 250.

Asia they are so numerous that all pilgrims to Mecca from these distant countries are known by the Arabs as Naqshbandí.

The original founder of this religious order was one Ubaidullah, but Baháuddín by his writings defined the principles of the sect, and established it on a secure basis. Pír Muhammad Baháuddín Naqshband, a contemporary of Timour, died A.H. 791 (1388).[1] He is the patron saint of Bukhárá, and when Vambery arrived in that city, the inhabitants at once concluded that his long and perilous journey was only taken for the purpose of visiting the tomb of the saint. The shrine of Baháuddín stands a few miles out of Bukhárá, on the Samarkand road, the tomb being in a small garden, exposed to the weather, as every roof built over it has been thrown down by supernatural agency. On one side is a mosque, in front of which is the famous Sang-i-murád, or stone of desire, worn and polished by the foreheads of generations of devotees, and adjoining is a large college. Over the tomb hang several rams' horns, a banner, and a broom formerly used in sweeping the sanctuary at Mecca.[2] Pilgrimages are made to this shrine from the most distant parts of the Muhammadan world, and it is customary for each Bukhariot to visit it every week, three pilgrimages being looked upon as equivalent to one paid to the distant Ka'ba. The inhabitants think that by merely uttering "Baháuddín balá-gardán!" "Baháuddín, thou averter of evil!" they will be saved from all misfortunes.

According to D'Herbelot, Baháuddín wrote a work called "Maqámat," or discourses on various subjects connected with eloquence and academic studies, which is the guide book of the sect. The title of Naqshband was bestowed on Baháuddín because he "drew incomparable pictures (naqsh-bandí) of the Divine science, and painted figures of the Eternal Invention, which are not imperceptible."

In Bengal, the Naqshbandí Faqírs, usually called "Mushkil-Ásán," a designation implying power to avert evil, are generally married men, and Bá-shara'. On Thursday evenings they perambulate the streets carrying a lighted lamp (Shama'), and proclaiming that there is only One who can alleviate sorrow, and whose ear is always open to the cry of the penitent. They never ask for alms, but accept whatever is given and in return imprint a "tilak," or mark, on the forehead of the alms giver.

There are two ceremonies observed by Muhammadan women closely connected with the peculiar doctrines of this fraternity. The first is a fast called Muskil-Ásán, observed on each Thursday in November. What its original signification was is now difficult to ascertain, but it was probably kept in seasons of adversity as at present, when after fasting for a day the celebrants eat Halwáh, and another sweatmeat called Chitwáh.

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[1] D'Ohsson places his death in A.H. 719 (1319).

[2] "Travels into Bukhárá," by Sir A. Burnes, ii, 271. "Travels in Central Asia," by Arminius Vambery, 194.

The other, known as "Mushkil-Kushá," or dispeller of difficulties, is celebrated on the seventh, seventeenth, and twenty-seventh of the moon in each month, when a goglet-(Kúza), and a salt-cellar, are arranged for the service, after which the fast is broken by eating millet and the sweetmeats Jalebí and Núkal.

(*d*) RAFÁ'Í.

The Rafá'í, or Gurzmár, Faqírs are less frequently met with in Bengal than any of the other Darwesh orders; but occasionally they wander into Eastern Bengal seeking disciples and soliciting alms.

The founder of this fraternity was Sayyid Ahmad ibn Abúal Hasan al Rafá'í, called Al Kabír and Al Wálí al 'Arif. He was nephew (bhánjá) of 'Abdul Qádir Gilání, and descendant of an Arab called Rifa'a. His abode was in the Baṭa'ih, or marshes, forming the delta of the Euphrates, and he died in the village of Om 'Obaidah A.H. 578 (1182), aged over seventy.[1] Leaving no issue, the family of his brother succeeded, and still preside over the order. Tradition has preserved a favourite saying of this haughty saint, "This foot of mine is over the necks of all the saints of Allah;" but is silent regarding his life.

The Rafá'í Faqírs are the same as the Howling Darweshes of Constantinople, who, although rare in India, are very numerous and popular in Turkey and Egypt.

Like the priests of Baal, the Rafá'í practise the most astonishing feats of self-torture, cutting themselves with knives, till the blood gushes out upon them, and pretending to thrust spikes into their eyes, to break large stone blocks placed on their chests, to eat live charcoal, to swallow swords, and to perform many other tricks of legerdemain.

An opportunity presented itself in 1874 of observing one of these Faqírs, a very ignorant, disreputable looking, middle-aged man, whose intellect was blunted by excessive indulgence in Indian hemp. He wore long matted locks, hanging down to his shoulders, a short beard, and small moustache, while his dress consisted of a long, very dirty, and ragged blouse, a piece of cotton cloth wrapped round his loins like a petticoat, and a woollen blanket thrown over his left arm. On his head was a greasy cap with ear flaps, known as a "Kán-ḍhapa;" on his left wrist were five silver bracelets, and on his right leg an anklet, presented by a Nawáb of Murshídábád and covered with leather to deceive bad characters. In his hand he carried an iron mace with a sharp pointed handle, and square crown hung over with rings, called a "gurz," from which the order derives one of its Indian names. With this formidable weapon the Rafá'í Faqírs are in the habit of enforcing their demands for charity by slashing their tongues, and beating their heads, till blood comes. The tongue of the man referred to was a horrible sight, seamed as it was with deep scars, the result of former violence, while on the top of his head was a large depressed cicatrix, produced by the same means.

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[1] His tomb was seen by Ibn Batúta in the fourteenth century. Lee's Translation, p. 33.

Around his neck hung three necklaces; one, called a "tasbíh," was composed of onyx, quartz, and carnelian beads; a second, or Kanṭhí, had a hundred and one beads of olive wood (zaitún), while the third, of the same name, had a similar number of beads made of clay (Khák shifá) from the sacred tomb of Karbaláh.

Such was the repulsive figure perambulating the streets of Dacca in 1874, and claiming to be a Sayyid. The Murshíd, or spiritual guide, of this man resided at Kulpahár in the Hamírpúr district of Bundelkhand.

Rafá'í Faqírs are Be-shara', freely indulging in intoxicating drugs. They are usually married men who neglect the regular prayers, and rarely, if ever, visit a mosque. By the Muhammadans of Bengal they are regarded with abhorrence and disgust.

(*e*) MADÁŖÍA.

The founder of this Darwesh order was Sayyid Badí'-ud-dín, Quṭb ul-Madár, born at Aleppo A.D. 1050, and according to the Mirát-i-Madáría his parents were Jews. Many legends are related of him. At the age of one hundred years he made the pilgrimage to Mecca, where he received from Muhammad permission to hold his breath, Habs-i-dam. Subsequently, he was directed to proceed to India and deliver it from an evil genius, Muckna Dev, which was destroying the people. Having confined the demon, he induced the inhabitants to return and settle with him in the town, still called Makanpúr in the Doab, where he performed many miracles, and at his death on the seventeenth Rajab, A.H. 837 (1433), in the three hundred and ninety-sixth year of his age, he left 1,442 sons, or disciples.

Sultán Ibráhim Sharqí, of Jaunpúr, carried his coffin, and erected a mausoleum over his remains.

The seventeenth of Rajab is observed as his festival ('urs[1]) throughout India; and at Makanpúr thousands of pilgrims, Hindu and Muhammadan, assemble when the water of the Ikshunadi, flowing past the tomb, is said for that one day to run in seven streams of milk, and food cooked with it is believed to be of ineffable virtue. The tomb at Makanpúr stands in the centre of a square, the interior being lighted by four latticed windows. Above the grave hangs a canopy of cloth of gold, and a similar covering, highly perfumed, is laid on the tomb; close by is a Mosque before which a fountain plays, and two prodigious boilers stand, in which a constant miracle is being performed, for if unholy rice be put into them, they still remain empty.

No woman dare enter the mausoleum, and if foolhardy enough to try, she is seized with excruciating pains which last a long time.[2]

Around the name of this saint many superstitions have collected, and he is often confounded with Ghází Miyán, whose flagstaff bears much resemblance to his. According to a great authority, Badí'uddín was a Çufí of a particular order, whose chief rites consist in the production of beatific visions by intoxication with Bháng. The sect originated in Persia, its peculiarities, modified by the influence of Hindu ascetics, being introduced into India by this Badí'uddín. In several respects the Madáría Faqírs resemble the Hindu Sannyasís in going about almost naked, braiding their hair, and smearing their bodies with ashes, as well as in fastening iron chains around their waists and necks. The Banjára vagrants of Oudh, according to Mr. Carnegy, regard Sháh Madár as their patron deity.

Madáría Faqírs are also called Dafálí, from the small tambourine (daf) carried by them; and Dhammálí, from running through and dancing in the midst of a fire on the great annual festival.

On the seventeenth of Rajab these Faqírs erect a lofty pole ('alam), enveloped in black, or red, cloth, from the top of which flutters a small black pennon, or the tail of a Yák. The principal spectacle is the exciting "dhammál," at which the Faqírs, worked into a state of enthusiasm, keep shouting "Dam Madár! Dam Madár!" and dancing barefooted in the midst of the fire of red hot charcoal, sustain no injury, owing, they say, to the direct interposition of the saint; but the Bhagat, or priest, of the

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[1] The festival is known as Chharí, Mední, Chirághán, and Badí', when the Dhammál Khelná, or Gae luṭáná, takes place. Elliot, "Supplemental Glossary," vol. i, 247.

[2] For further particulars regarding this shrine, *see* "Lord Valentia's Travels," vol. i, 202; "Observations on the Mussulmáns of India," vol. ii, 321; and Shore's "Notes on Indian Affairs," ii, 489.

Dosádhs performs similar antics without the slightest damage. May it not be reasonably inferred that this meaningless pageant is a survival of some aboriginal worship preserved by the Dosádhs, and copied by the followers of Madár.

In the festival the Faqírs prepare cakes, or Madár Ka-roṭ, consisting of flour and minced meat, which are eagerly bought and eaten by the spectators.

By respectable and peace-loving people these Faqírs are regarded as great nuisances. They wander about the city with the tambourine to which cymbals (jhánjh) are attached, and, like the hurdy-gurdy player of England, drive nervous people distracted by their unreasonable noise. A rich shopkeeper busily engaged in striking a bargain, or a fat Muhammadan gentleman about to take his siesta, is no sooner espied than the Faqír begins to beat and jangle his instrument, and to create such a disturbance that the victims are only too glad to get rid of him by paying a small sum of money.

In Dacca Madáría Faqírs dress in white with a black turban, and hanging on the chest is a "tasbíh," or rosary of wooden beads. Besides extorting money from their townsmen, these Faqírs manufacture amulets, and "baddhís," or sashes, for those who put trust in them.

DARZÍ.

The tailor is one of the most honoured workmen, Khalífa, or Kárígar being the usual titles by which he is addressed. There is especial disgrace in abusing a tailor, for Edris (Enoch), one of the first "payambars," or prophets, of Islám, was the father of such as ply the needle. Further, the Darzí, like the Rafúgar, sits cross-legged, and was in consequence not expected to stand up even when a Nawáb entered his workshop.

Almost every Muhammadan adult can sew, and whenever a poor man is in want of work he takes service as a tailor. There are, however, several sorts of tailors; for example, the Bazárí Darzí, or hawker of ready made clothes, the Topí wálah, or cap-maker, and the common Darzí, or clothier. From four to eight anas is the average day's pay, but as a rule the workmen receive monthly wages, and often accept piecework to be done at home. Widows and poor women, again, earn a livelihood by sewing garments furnished by the master tailors.

A boy is taught to handle a needle in the following curious way: Two thin pieces of wood, or two stalks of grass, are given him, and with these he is made to go through all the actions of stitching, called "ṭánkna." Having progressed thus far, a piece of cloth, or sampler, is put in his hands and he has to imitate the patterns traced on it, a task known as "'álam-Kháná." Until an exact copy is made he advances no further.

Although the Darzí is a slavish imitator, showing little originality, he is thoroughly acquainted with the different stitches used by the seamster and seamstress of Europe. The hemming stitch he calls turpan; the net, jali; the herring-bone, zanjíra-bandhí; the running, lapki or pasujna; the buttonhole, káj; basting, kok-dená; and the ornamental stitch by which pieces of cloth are united, ormá, or sultáni.

The needle is said to have been unknown to the ancient Hindus, but now-a-days Hindu tailors, generally Ghulám Káyasths, are to be met with sewing in the shops of cloth-merchants and making bedding, quilts, and mosquito-curtains, but declining to make body clothes, although they are low Ṣúdras, and natives of Silhet, where caste is of little account.

DASTÁR-BAND.

This is a Muhammadan trade never engaged in by Hindus. The Dastár-band is also known as Pagṛí-band, and although frequently obliged to stitch rolls of cloth, he would be offended if called Darzí, or tailor

Various shaped turbans, or head-dresses, are worn by natives of Bengal and arranged by these seamsters, but if the wife or sister is expert at needlework, the turban of the husband, or brother, is made at home. Every profession has its own distinctive head-dress, and not to wear it when visiting, or on ceremonial occasions, is considered discourteous.

Turbans are usually fashioned on a block (golá), made of jute cuttings, the nucleus (batáná) being formed of pith, or old rags, around which white, variegated, or striped muslins are twisted, but "pagṛís" of very gaudy colours are fancied by dandies.

The following turbans are daily to be seen in Dacca:

Shor-bor, worn by Muhammadan table attendants.
Laṭṭú-dar, by Mahájans, Banias, and Amla.
Ghaira, by noblemen at Darbárs.
Khirkí-dar, by Hindustani Lálás and bankers.
'Amáma, Mughalia, and Katlí, the two former by Mughals and their descendants, the latter by young Bengal.
Marhátta, and Mughalia-Marhátta by natives of the Dakhin.
Shamlá by Wakíls.
Júla-dar by Amla, Peshkárs, and Sarishtadárs.

DAST-FAROSH.

PURÁNA KAPRÁ FAROSH.

The occupation of an old clothesman is followed by any poor person. He either begs for, or buys, old clothes and rags, which he sells to the Naicha-band for making his snakes; to the Mash'alchí for his torch; and to the Jildgar for binding books.

ḌHAṚI. ḌHÁṚHÍ. ḌHÁṚHIN.

The Dhárí in Oude,[1] and the north-west provinces, are allied to the Nats and Kanjars, being musicians and sellers of dairy produce. In Bengal, however, this is the name of a class of Muhammadan musicians, generally women, who play, sing, and dance, being regarded by connoisseurs as more talented performers than the Míráṣan. They are taught by masters in the large towns of Hindustán, and are engaged for a limited period by rich families in Dacca.

DHOBÍ.

The Mussulmán washerman is also known as the Sufaid-gar, Mistarí, and Istrí-wáláh, and when abused, is designated "Narak ka dhoná wáláh."

These men assume as many airs as their Hindu brethren, refusing to wash clothes belonging to the Chamár, Mihtar, Dôm, or Paṭní, and giving over to the Hindustaní or Khoṇṭa washerman the cleansing of the Chhaṭhí, or puerperal, garments, and declining to touch bedding on which any one has died.

Formerly, the Dhobí observed many Hindu practices, and worshipped the beetle and plank used in washing. In days of yore they were also notorious drunkards; of late years, however, they have become strict Farazís, and relinquished all such customs as deadly sins. In Dacca there are not more than twenty houses occupied by them. They have a "Sardár," and generally intermarry among themselves; but if rich enough a bride is bought from a poor Muhammadan, or Hindu family.

In Bengal there are several superstitions connected with the washerman. No Muhammadan will give out clothes to wash, or receive them back, on Thursdays, or after dark; while the Hindu objects to do so on Tuesdays or Saturdays, and at the new or full moon.

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[1] Carnegy's Notes, &c., p. 18.

Like the Hindu Dhobí, the Muhammadan calenders cloth, and the calenderers' is no longer a distinct trade. The mangle being unknown in the East, clothes are beaten with a heavy mallet, or beetle (Kundí).

DHUNIYÁ.

This is the Sanskrit name for a carder of cotton, the followers of which trade are known in various parts of India by different names. In Bombay a carder is called Naddáf, or Pinjiyára;[1] in Hindustan Bihná; in Gayá Dhuniyá; south of the Sona, Mançur; and in Bengal Dhuniyá, or Tula-wáláh. The class is undoubtedly of Hindu origin, and are still regarded by Muhammadans as out-castes, the reason usually given for this exclusion being that they eat flesh in a raw condition, which, however, is a baseless calumny.

In former days, before they were imbued with new religious ideas, the Dhuniyás worshipped their bow on the full moon of Ṣrávan (July, August); and a feast was held at which cakes and goats' flesh were eaten, and large quantities of toddy drunk. Even now they worship the carding implements before commencing the season's work. Of late years they have been told by their teachers that they are descended from Mançúr-al-Halláj,[2] a famous Çúfí, the first person who taught mankind the use of the carding bow. The name Al-Halláj was derived from the following story: Mançúr, who used to sit at the door of a cotton carder's shop, one day asked the man to go on an errand. "But I myself am busy carding," answered the other. "Do my business," said Mançúr, "and I will card for you." The man went as he was bid, and on his return found all his cotton carded. Such is the strange pedigree of these credulous converts.

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[1] Sanskrit, Pinjana, a bow for cleaning cotton.

[2] Abú Mugh, al Husain ibn Mançúr al Hallaj, was a native of Al-Baida, in Fárs. Having attained to Wáçiláh, the last stage of Çúfism, he went to Bághdad during the reign of the Khalífa Al-Muqtadir. The following marvellous stories are told of him while there: He could produce summer fruits in winter, winter fruits in summer; he knew the secrets of families and the inmost thoughts of all he met; and having tasted a few drops of celestial nectar obtained from the heavenly Húrís, he could no longer restrain himself, but went about shouting "Án-al-haq! Án-al-haq! I am God!" For this impiety he was put to death at the Báb-at-táq of Bághdad, on the 23rd Zíqa'dah, A.H. 309 (April, 922). His followers, however, assert that when taken to the place of execution the soldiers could not seize him, as his body eluded their grasp, and appeared composedly sitting at a distance. His soul was then in heaven, where it was accosted by Muhammad, who admitted that he was quite justified in proclaiming himself God; but that for the sake of practical religion, and for the welfare of mankind, it would be expedient to allow himself to be put to death. The soul accordingly returned to earth, reanimated his body, and he endured the cruel death to which he had been condemned. Muhammadans are still divided in opinion about him, one half repudiating him as an impostor, while his followers say that his likeness was given to one of his enemies, who suffered in his stead. Malcolm's "History of Persia," ii, 400; D'Herbelot sub Hallage, "Ibn-Khallikan," vol. i, 423.

Several families of Dhuniyás, now domiciled in Dacca, originally came from Tirhút and Bihár, and, as the Bengali Mussulmán never follows this occupation, every year, towards the beginning of November, skilled workmen wend their way from Patna, Gayá, and other towns to Eastern Bengal.

Women of low Ṣúdra castes card cotton with the "Phutkí;" but it is only the professional Muhammadan carder who uses the Dhunwí.

The Dhuniyá, who resides permanently in Bengal, turns his hands to any trade during the hot, or slack season, often acting as a Bihistí, or water-carrier, or as a Pankhá coolie.

The bow used in carding is known as the Dhunwí, or Rám Dhánuk, a name also given to the rainbow;[1] the dumb-bell shaped instrument, made of the heart of a tamarind tree, with which the bowstring is made to vibrate, being called "dasta."

The cotton-grower extracts the seeds (binaulá), and feeds his cattle with them, while he sells the cotton to the carder. A skilful Dhuniyá will prepare eight sérs (16 lbs.) of the best cotton, and from ten to twelve sérs of the common, in a day. For a good day's work he earns at least eight anas. For carding the cotton of the Semal tree (*Bombax heptaphylla*), which is an excellent stuffing for pillows, half an ana for each sér is charged.

FÁLÚDA-WÁLAH.

In his shop various kinds of sherbet are prepared, as well as triangular doughy masses of rice, wheat flour, and sago, coloured with different substances. The sherbet usually sold consists of sugar and water, into which one of these masses is put, while the favourite colouring matters are sappan-wood (baqam), saffron, and the petals of the Nyctanthes arbor tristis.

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[1] Strange superstitions are attached to this bow. A Natní, or gipsy woman, ill with fever, earnestly besought to be allowed to crawl through one and be cured. Unfortunately, one could not be procured at the time, and she had to recover by ordinary treatment.

Divers sorts of syrups (Shírah), made with pomegranate or lemon juice, flavoured with rose-water, " Keorá " (Pandanus), or Kus-kus, are also to be bought, but mucilaginous drinks made with the seeds of basil (Tukhmí-raihán), or Ispaghúl (Plantago Ispaghula), are preferred by some.

GOÁLA.

Indian Muhammadans have no prejudice against selling milk, and the name milk-seller carries with it no disgrace as in Arabia, where the Bedouin will not sell milk, but permits the despised Egyptian to do so.

Mussulmáns, generally styled Bepárís, who keep milch cows, make neither butter nor "ghí," but sell milk, and prepare to order "má-ul-joban," or whey. Whey is a remedy of the greatest reputation in all diseases due to excess of heat, and in Muhammadan families is the favourite domestic aperient.

Bráhmans and Hindus of the higher Ṣúdra castes allege that they will not touch milk sold by a Muhammadan unless it has been milked into a vessel held by themselves; but at village fairs the Bráhman is often seen receiving into his brass pot milk from the earthern pitcher. When discovered, he defends his conduct on the plea that milk, the product of the sacred animal, cannot be polluted even by standing in the vessel of the unbeliever; but no excuse such as this would exonerate him from loss of caste if the pan belonged to the Farangí.

HÁFIZ.

A Háfiz, or one who can repeat the Koran by heart, is employed in the public mosques to recite it during the Ramazán. Throughout the month of fasting, the congregation assembles every evening in the mosque at 8 p.m., for the 'Ishá-namáz, or night prayers, and, at the conclusion, the "Khatm-taráwí" consisting of twenty supplementary prayers and genuflexions, being gone through, the Háfiz recites one or more of the thirty sections (Sipára) of the Koran. Two men are generally engaged in each mosque, one officiating during the first fifteen days, the other during the remainder of the month, and on the Îd-ul-fiṭr each member of the congregation subscribes something towards their remuneration. A Háfiz may belong to any trade or profession, but the most respected are usually teachers, or Munshís.

All classes of Muhammadans look up to a Háfiz, although it is not unusual for him to yield to the temptations of a town life, drinking spirits, and leading a life in no respect better than that of individuals less conversant with the Koran.

According to the Sunnís, no Shíah can become a Háfiz, and one of the ordinary arguments in favour of their Mazhab, or creed, is grounded on this allegation.

HAJJÁM.

The Muhammadan barber belongs to one of the lowest ranks, and no respectable family will associate, or intermarry, with his. The Bájunia and Hajjám were formerly the same person, but of late years they have been gradually separating.

The Hajjám, like his namesake in other countries, dabbles in medicine and surgery, consequently he is often styled Bhedi,[1] from his skill in extracting worms from decayed teeth, and "Más-Káta," from circumcising boys. In many parts of the country he is also the Ábdál, who gelds bulls; but any Mussulmán peasant will castrate kids. When not otherwise employed, the Hajjám is found cultivating the soil.

Their women sell "mantras," or magical formulæ, against toothache, earache, and neuralgic pains; and prepare liniments to cure colic and other internal disorders.

The Hajjám is not the important personage that the Hindu Nápit is, being less independent and wayward, as his services are not indispensable.

HAKÍM.

Muhammadan, or, as it is usually called, Yunání, or Greek, medicine has never flourished in Hindostan, as its study was neither fostered by State endowments nor patronized by royalty. For the last three centuries the most celebrated physicians in India have been Shíah graduates from the colleges of Shíráz, Samarkand, and Bukhára. During the reigns of Akbar, Jahángír, and Sháh Jahán, the court physicians were Persian Shías, but Sunní doctors were favoured by the bigot Aurangzíb.

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[1] From Sanskrit, Bheda, piercing.

After his death the Shías again predominated, holding all the official posts in the Empire; but to the Sunní physicians the credit is due of having written many of the most practical, as well as popular, medical works in the Persian language, while the salaried court doctors did little towards advancing their profession. The Hakím of the Mughal period was not only a physician, learned in philosophy, metaphysics, and science generally, but a politician who was consulted in important affairs of State. As often happened, the Hakím, being the friend and confidant of the monarch, was permitted greater license of speech than other courtiers. When any difficulty with a neighbouring nation arose, and great tact and ability were required, the court physician was often sent as a special envoy to settle it. It was for the political part he played, and not for any professional services, that he retained his dignified position at the imperial court.

A lower and less respected grade of physician was the Jarráh, or surgeon, whose skill, like that of the barber-surgeons of Europe, was limited to the opening of boils and abscesses, and rarely extended to the amputation of limbs, or to any major operation. The frequency of sword cuts, punctured and lacerated wounds, must, however, have accustomed him to treat such injuries.

The general practitioner, as we would style him, was the Ṭabíb, whose daily life brought him in contact with all classes of society, and whose experience of diseases, of idiosyncracies, and of treatment, secured for him much popularity and respect.

The oculist (Kahhál) was occasionally met with, but his skill was uncertain, and his ignorance undeniable.

The lowest in rank, the Baiṭár, or veterinary surgeon, looked after the royal elephants and stud, but for these services he only received the pay of an Ahadí, or trooper.

Under the Muhammadan rulers, there being no medical schools, students were apprenticed to Hakíms, who daily devoted a few hours, in the intervals of practice, to the instruction of their pupils. The size of the class varied according to the reputation of the master who endeavoured, for his own credit, to encourage the youths in their studies. He granted certificates of proficiency only to those considered worthy, otherwise he would have forfeited the right to what the Eastern nations set the highest value upon, the leaving a good name behind him.

In India, no official like the Hakím-bashí of Turkey conferred diplomas, so the medical profession was open to all; but the pupil of any famous doctor was sure of obtaining practice in cities where his master was known, and of at once gaining a position which less favoured rivals took years to reach. The result of this system has been that many amateurs from reading medical works fancy themselves able to express an opinion on any subject connected with the structure and temperaments of the human body, or the properties of plants and qualities of articles of food. Problems which still puzzle wiser heads are solved by these pretenders to medical skill without hesitation, and to their own satisfaction. Where there was no encouragement held out for the advancement of learning, and where a widespread and remunerative system of quackery prevailed, a high standard of professional knowledge was not to be expected.

The Hakím practising in the towns of Bengal is generally familiar with the text-books of Yunání medicine, but very ignorant regarding the type of modern disease. When summoned to see a patient he never commits himself to any expression of opinion; but after feeling the pulse, noting its volume, tone, and rapidity, leaves with a few words of comfort and strict injunctions regarding diet and cooling drinks. After several visits, and not until the urine has been examined, and his text-books consulted, is his diagnosis formed. This being done, he unpacks his stores and attacks the enemy with his most powerful drugs. Bleeding is gradually being laid aside; but in pleurisy venesection from the side affected is still recommended,[1] and in the delirium of fever leeches or cupping glasses are applied. The particular vein to be opened often causes much anxiety, for it has been authoritatively laid down that certain veins are to be opened in special disorders. In leprosy and other blood diseases, the "haft-andám," or median vein, is the proper vessel to cut; in pneumonia and pleurisy, the "básalík;" and in delirium, the "qífal," or cephalic vein.

It is on the examination of the urine that the Hakím chiefly relies when forming his diagnosis. He has no urinometer and no reagents. The sample being poured into a thin glass bottle (qárúra), he carefully determines its colour, surface (zubd), sediment (rusúb), and density (qawání).

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[1] Early in the sixteenth century the medical schools of Europe were ranged in rival factions on the question which was the proper arm to bleed from in pleurisy. Pierre Brissot, in 1502, taught that bleeding from the affected side, though commended by Rhasis, Avicenna, and Mesue, was contrary to the opinion of Hippocrates and Galen. He was opposed by Denys, a Portuguese physician, and the decision was left to the Academy of Salamanca. After much discussion the council gave the oracular reply that Brissot taught as Hippocrates and Galen had done. This only added fuel to the fire. The adherents of Denys were dissatisfied, so the question was referred to the Emperor Charles V., it being urged that the teaching of Brissot was impious and pernicious, as detrimental to the body as the schism of Luther was to the soul. This memorable controversy was renewed at the death of Charles III. of Savoy, in 1553, who was attacked with pleurisy, bled according to Brissot's system, and died. The question was left unsettled by the Emperor; but the medical schools throughout Europe continued to squabble over the subject for several generations.

The anatomical knowledge possessed by the Hakíms is quite rudimentary and very antiquated. The Muhammadan belief that a corpse feels pain when violence is inflicted has always prevented the study of human anatomy, while the resection of animals has been prosecuted with only partial success. The tendons, nerves, and blood-vessels are only known to the modern Hakíms by the indefinite term "Rag;" while the muscles, undistinguished the one from the other, are spoken of as "gosht," or flesh; and the intestines, with all the abdominal organs, as "Antrí." According to Muhammadan anatomists, the human body is composed of seven elements, namely, chyle, blood, muscles, fat, bones, brain, marrow, and semen. The only textbook of anatomy is the Tasrihí Mançúrí,[1] of the fourteenth century, a most creditable work for that age, being illustrated with rough drawings of the arteries, veins, intestines, and skeleton.

The Hakíms know little or nothing of physiology. The liver is still regarded, as it was by Europeans until the days of Harvey, as the root and fountain head of the venous system; while the spleen is held to be the organ where the blood is formed and purified. It was the Hindoo physicians who first taught that this was the function of the spleen, but the Yunání doctors advanced a step farther, by pointing out that when the spleen was inflamed, or congested, emaciation and bloodlessness ensued, for which the actual cautery was the proper remedial treatment. Accordingly Hakíms either cauterize, or apply blisters and issues in all cases of enlarged spleen. On the mysterious subject of impregnation, Hakíms are content to follow the precept of the Koran,[2] and to rest satisfied with a notion of the seventh century.

Pathology has not made any advance for many centuries; and all diseases are, as Avicenna wrote, due either to excess, deficiency, or faulty combination of one or more of the fundamental humours (mawádd) of the human body.

Although Yunání physicians have written much on hygiene, greater attention was always paid to fanciful descriptions of disease, and to Materia Medica. The careful accumulation and comparison of clinical observations were generally omitted, and every faculty was bent on discovering specifics, or a panacea for every ailment. Each physician boasts of having a secret nostrum, which is vaunted as an infallible remedy; but instead of having it tested by independent observations he only employs it as a valuable source of profit.

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[1] The author is Mançúr ibn Muhammad ibn Yúsuf ibn Ilyas Herátí, who dedicated it to Pír Muhammad, grandson of Tímur. The date of the work is A.H. 799 (1396).

[2] Ch. xxiii. This text bears a most striking resemblance to that of Job x, 9-11, both being probably founded on ideas current among the Semitic races.

In their study of Nosology the Indian Hakíms have devoted much labour to the varieties of type exhibited by disease, to the effects produced by peculiarities of temperament, climate, or age; but have entirely neglected the investigation of the exciting and predisposing causes of disease, as well as the laws regulating its origin and dissemination.

On the therapeutic treatment of disease Hakíms entertain many fanciful ideas. According to them, all medicines possess one of the four following degrees of virtue:—

a. Those which do not manifest their usual effects in ordinary doses.
b. Such medicines as produce inconsiderable, though sensible, effects.
c. Those powerful drugs, which must be cautiously given, although certain in their action.
d. Poisons and other drugs which excite deleterious consequences.

Drugs, vegetables, and all articles of diet, they assert, have either sweet, bitter, acid, salt, pungent, or astringent ('áfis) qualities, producing peculiar effects on the different humours; and are hot, cool, heavy, light, aphrodisiac, lithontriptic, demulcent, or emollient. Should the proper medicine not be procurable, its succedaneum (badal) may be prescribed, and if its action is thought to be too powerful, it may be lessened by a corrector (muçlah) in the same may as the English apothecary combines sulphate of potash with scammony to counteract its irritating effects.

Cephalic (sa'út) medicines are extensively used by Hakíms in the treatment of common colds and headaches, it being the received opinion that there is direct communication between the nostrils and the brain. Equally absurd is the notion that the shape of a fruit often indicates its use as a medicine, and because the Mango bears a slight resemblance to a kidney, it is held to be useful in renal diseases.[1] Indian Hakíms have adopted many drugs of the Hindu pharmacopœia, and make use of Yunání remedies in diseases for which they have been declared unfit by Arab and Persian physicians.

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[1] The superstition that the shape, or look, of a plant indicates its officinal use, is one of the very oldest known. Thus in Genesis it is mentioned that mandrakes promote conception, because its bifid roots bear a fancied resemblance to a man. So the modest little eyebright (*Euphrasia officinalis*) of English meadows got its reputation for curing ophthalmia, because its small white flower, with a dark dot in the centre, was fancied to be like an eye; and the Pulmonaria, or Lungwort, was given to cure coughs, because its spotted leaves resembled the human lungs.

In Bengal the following, being the most valued authorities, are the text-books given to students:—

Mízán-i-tibb, the first book given to the student, was published, A.H. 1125 (1713).

Tibb-ul-akbar, with the date A.H. 1112 (1700).

Qárabádín Qádirí, written A.H. 1126 (1714).

The author of these three works was Muhammad Akbar, Shah Arzání,[1] a physician of the Delhi Court. The first treats of medicine generally; the second, a translation of an early Arabic work, the Sharḥ-al-asbáb, of the causes, symptoms, and treatment of diseases; while the third is a work on Materia Medica.

Other standard works generally consulted are the Jami'ul-Jami',[2] an encyclopedia of medicine, consisting of three sections:—

1. Makhzan-ul-adwiya, on Materia Medica, of the date A.H. 1187 (1773).
2. Qarábádín Ḳabír.
3. 'Iláj amrází mukhtaç aur ghair mukhtaç, on the practice of medicine.

This great work is highly esteemed, and the Hakíms boast that if it were preserved, and all other Yunání books of medicine destroyed, nothing of value would be lost. In compiling this encyclopedia, the author was assisted by his uncle, 'Ulwí Khán, the first physician of his age.[3]

The above mentioned text-books are ordinarily used by the Hakíms of Dacca, and it is remarkable that they were all written by physicians settled at the Nawábí court of Murshídábád, the only place suited for study at the middle of the eighteenth century. Even at the present day the Qánun of Avicenna, or its abridgment, the Qánunchah, is read, and followed by many Hakíms; but as their knowledge of Arabic is slight, Persian or Hindustani translations are usually preferred.

Even in the brightest days of the Mughal rule implicit confidence was not placed in the skill of the court Hakíms, and very rarely did any one occupy the position of the trusted family doctor. When European physicians appeared in India they were consulted in urgent cases, and, not infrequently, occupied state appointments.

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[1] His father was Hájí Mír Muhammad Muqím, a Sunní by religion. Other well-known works by the son are Mufarríh ul-qulúb, written in 1712, and Hádad-ul-amráz.

[2] The author was Hakím Sayyid Muhammad Husain Khán, son of Hakím Muhammad Hádí 'Aqíli-al-'Alawí, a Shíah from Shíráz. His elder brother was the famous Díwán of Bengal, Muhammad Reza Khán.

[3] Sayyid Muhammad Háshim Shírází was born A.D. 1669. When thirty years old he came to Delhi, and settled there. When Nádir Sháh retired from Delhi in 1739, he carried off the Hakím with him, but in 1743 he returned. In 1747 he died. Sháh 'Álam I conferred on him the title of Mu'tadil-ul-mulk, 'Ulwí Khán, and gave him land worth Rs. 3,000 a year.

The first European physician resident at the Delhí court was a Frenchman, M. Bernard, a boon companion of the Emperor Jahángír, and who had the credit of being “an excellent physician and skilful surgeon.” Bernier mentions[1] that his pay was ten crowns a day, but this was greatly increased by his attendance on the high ladies of the Seraglio, and on the Omrahs, who seemed to vie with each other in making him the most liberal presents, not only because of the cures he effected, but on account of his influence at Court.

A few years later the Venetian Manouchi arrived at Delhí, where he remained forty-eight years (1649–1697). He was body physician to Dárá Shikoh, eldest son of Sháh Jahán, until his death in 1659. From 1659 to 1667 François Bernier was doctor to Aurangzíb.

Tavernier met with European doctors practising in different parts of India. In 1652 he resided with Peter de Lan, a Dutchman from Batavia, who was attached to the court of Golcondah. He had attained that position through the stupidity of the native doctors. The King was ordered to be bled from the sublingual veins to cure a headache, but no one would undertake to do it. De Lan performed the simple operation, and was richly rewarded. In 1665 Tavernier reached Allahabad, where he found the governor in bad health, attended by ten Persian physicians, and “Claudius Maille of Bourges, who practises both Chyrurgery and physick both together.”

In Bengal, Schouten states that the Mogols never send an army into the field without applying to the Company (Dutch) for surgeons “Qu’on y considere assez, et à qui les principaux Seigneurs se confient volontiers.”[2]

The services of English physicians were also sought for, and appreciated. In 1636, when Jahánárá, the second daughter of Sháh Jahán, was severely burned in the Dakhin, a messenger was dispatched to Surat, and Gabriel Boughton, surgeon of the Company’s ship “Hopewell” was sent, under whose skilful treatment the Princess was restored to health. In 1675 John Fryer attended the family of the Mughal general at Jeneah. The most important service, however, conferrred by an English doctor, was when William Hamilton[3] cured the Emperor Farrukhsiyar, in 1715, of a carbuncle, and acquired for his country the settlement of Calcutta. In 1742 Mr. Forth, surgeon

[1] Bernier, i, 309.

[2] “Voyage de Wouter Schouten aux Indes Orientales,” ii, 298.

[4] Hamilton died of a putrid fever in 1717, and at the present day no memorial of his disinterestedness exists.

of the English factory, treated 'Alí Vardí Khán in his last illness; and in 1763, when the English were massacred at Ráj-mahal, the only officer spared was Dr. Fullarton, who had been of great service to several Muhammadan chiefs.

HAKKÁK.

Workmen employed in manufacturing glass beads call themselves by this name, but the real lapidary is rare, while the Muhammadan Sang-tarash, or stone-cutter, is unknown in Dacca.

The Hakkák makes spectacles of rock crystal (Sang-billaur), cuts glass in imitation of diamonds, and gives the desired shape to gems. His implements are a wheel driven backwards and forwards with the left hand, a wire bow, and emery powder (Kúranj-pathar).

Muhammadans engaged in making glass beads obtain their material from the Shísha-gar. It is stained with various colours, and beads for necklaces, ornaments for nose rings, and counterfeit stones for armlets and rings, are made with it. The following five kinds of wheels are used in a manufactory for grinding and polishing glass: the first, called "Kaṛan," is made of slate; the second of bell-metal (Kánsá); the third of teak wood; the fourth of tin, and the fifth of flint (Chakmak). A bamboo bow strung with an iron wire, and rubbed with moistened emery powder, is employed for cutting glass.

HALWÁÍ.

The art of preserving fruits in sugar, or vinegar, being unknown to the Hindus, all the preserves procurable in the Bazárs of the East are made by the Mussulmán Halwáí, who, however, destroys, by too many spices and by excess of sugar, the natural flavour of the fruit. It is astonishing how fond the lower classes of Muhammadans are of sweets, consuming heaps of the common confectionery without hesitation and without injury, whilst a surfeit of them never makes the least difference in the quantity of food afterwards taken. The Halwáí is an especial favourite with youths, who are as fond of spending a few coppers on a holiday in his shop as any English schoolboy.

"Halwá," the sweetmeat from which the confectioner derives his name, is made of flour, clarified butter, and sugar, coloured with saffron, and flavoured with almonds, raisins, and pistachio nuts, being much inferior, however, to the Halwá brought from Kábul by Afghán traders, and said to be made with camels' milk.

The Halwáí prepares jams of mangoe, cocoanut, ginger, and "bel;" and candies oranges, citrons, and bel fruit. The pickles (áchár), consumed in large quantities by all Muhammadans, are of three kinds, prepared with vinegar, mustard-oil, or salt. The Halwáí likewise makes his own vinegar with sugar, molasses, and water, and with it preserves vegetables and fruits of all kinds. Mangoes and limes are, however, often preserved in mustard-oil to which pounded mustard seed has been added. Járaka, or fruit in brine, is highly recommended as an aid to digestion when eaten as dessert. Arab pedlars bring the best to Bengal, but in Dacca the aromatic lime known as "Kághazí," from the fineness of its rind, is usually preserved in this way.

HAWÁÍ-GAR.

The maker of fireworks, always a Muhammadan, is often called "Gol-sáz," but the Persian title of "Átash-báz" is no longer in use. The Hindu Málákár does make a few simple fireworks for weddings, but this is never his exclusive trade.

In Dacca six or seven men are always employed in making fireworks, the most skilful having learned the art in Calcutta. The chief chemicals used by the native pyrotechnist are sulphur, chlorate of potash, nitrate of silver, saltpetre, sulphate of copper, nitrate of strontia, nitrate of baryta, and charcoal. The Hawáí-gar is an adept in preparing blue, yellow, red, and green lights; but native crowds prefer seeing the noisy, and more dangerous, fireworks such as the sky-rocket (hawáí), squib (murrá), cracker (pāṭáká), Catherine-wheel (charkí), Kabutarí, Tonta, do-damba, and Mahtábí.

JILD-GAR.

The Jild-gar is the Mujallid of the Arabs, the bookbinder of Europe.

The art of binding books, unknown either to the Muhammadans or Hindus, has been acquired within the last century, and at present is one of the most thriving trades.

The Jild-gar, taking "Chhímí-haldí," a species of turmeric, "Methí" (fœnum Græcum), "nim" leaves, and water, boils them together. Into this decoction the sheets are dipped, then pressed, dried, and hung on a rope in the shade. When dry they are rubbed with a stone, which glazes the paper and fixes the ink.

The book chiefly sold is of course the Koran, although not five per cent. of the Muhammadan population can read, or understand it when read. The Koran is never written nowadays in Eastern Bengal, and an old illuminated copy will fetch a thousand rupees, or even more. Lithographed editions from Meerut, Lucknow, and Bombay are much preferred to those printed in Calcutta. An unbound Koran can be bought for sixteen anas, a bound one for twenty-four anas. Although the Koran is not printed by authority it is accepted as correct if issued by a native press, no Muhammadan even seeming to entertain the suspicion that the sacred volume could be tampered with by any printer, which is the more surprising as the printers, usually illiterate, may not unnaturally be supposed careless in the selection and arrangement of their letters. The explanation probably lies in the fact that few Arabic scholars in India ever make the Koran a critical study, and the large majority of persons who daily read it are too ignorant of Arabic to be able to form any opinion regarding its correctness.

During the Muhammadan rule, the Jild-gars prepared the thick tough paper on which Sanads, and other official documents, were written, but this art is fast dying out.

JULAHÁ.

This name is repudiated by all classes of Muhammadan weavers, being considered as an abusive one, and synonymous with the Arabic "Ahmaq," a fool.

Various humorous stories are told of the stupidity of the Juláhas, one of the favourite in Dacca being the tale of how a party of them tried to escape from Dhemra, a celebrated weaving village. They jumped on board a boat at night, forgetting, however, to unfasten the painter, and after rowing with might and main all night, at daybreak, much to their astonishment, the boat was still at the ghát of Dhemra. After puzzling their brains for some time they came to the sage conclusion that, though desirous of leaving Dhemra, Dhemra was unwilling to part with them, and had followed in the wake of their boat. When general stupidity is imputed to a body of men in India, we may surely infer that they have become converts to a new religion, or belong to a servile aboriginal tribe. The Juláhas, there is every reason for believing, belonged to a despised Hindu caste, who in a body became converts to Muhammadanism. Their customs, observed with that punctiliousness peculiar to converts, are essentially Shíạh. During the month of Muharram they do not comb their hair, chew betle, or eat from vessels in which fish have been dressed. Besides, on the fifth, sixth, and seventh days of that month they wear the "Baddhí" and "Kafní," badges of the two Martyrs.

Their headman is called Mu'tabar, and the honorary titles among them are Málik, Mundle, Kárígar, and Shiqdár.

In former days the Juláhas were peculiar among Muhammadans in never having the "Kábín," or marriage settlement, drawn up in the presence of the Qází; but of late years the practice has been introduced, and in addition a "Mahr-námah," or deed of settlement, is executed.

JÚTÍ-WÁLÁH.

Shoes are made by the Chamár and Rishí, but are sold by all Ṣúdras, and even by degraded Brahmans. The real shoe-seller, however, is the Muhammadan, and the traders who supply the country at large with shoes belong to this creed. Júti-wálás follow a respectable trade, being regarded as the equals of the best families. They are very strict Farázís, never opening their shops, or selling a pair of shoes, on a Friday. Shoe-selling is a modern business, and a pair of shoes is nowadays considered by the thrifty peasant as indispensable as a cheap and fragile cotton umbrella. It is supposed that, owing to its recent development, the Farází Maulavís have had sufficient influence to stop the sale of shoes on the Muhammadan Sunday, although their admonitions have failed to close other shops on that day.

In describing the Hindus of Bengal, in 1770, Stavorinus mentions that they "wear a kind of shoes which are put on slip-shod, and are turned up before like the Turkish slippers (pápost)." About thirty years ago the "Nágauráh" was the fashionable style, but at the present day both kinds have given place to shoes of English design. During the Muhammadan rule shoes were generally named after the city where they were made, as Dihlawí and Peshaurí.

KAHHÁL.

The cities of Benares and Lucknow are famous for their oculists, who are either Muhammadans or Hindu Khattrís. During the cold season individuals belonging to these families travel about Bengal, operating in the villages and towns.

At Sholághar, Pargannah Bikrampúr, resides a Muhammadan family which has practised ophthalmic surgery for many generations. They possess no text books, but the art is transmitted from father to son, and the young men are carefully instructed by the elders.

These native oculists recognize two varieties of cataract, Níl-bind, the hard, and Motiyá-bind, the soft. The former they cannot cure, but the latter they often successfully treat. The operation[1] that they practise is very like that formerly advocated by Sir James Earle and Mr. B. Bell, which is known as "extraction through the sclerotic."

The operation is performed in the following manner:—An incision parallel to the lower and outer edge of the cornea is made with a lancet-shaped knife (báns-pattá), held between the thumb and forefinger so that only about the fourth of an inch can penetrate the globe. On its withdrawal a blunt pointed triangular probe[2] being introduced the cataract is broken up, and on the probe being suddenly drawn out the milky lens escapes.

After the operation the eyelids are smeared with an ointment consisting of opium, nux-vomica, "tulasí," black pepper, "Paṭhání lodh," and pulse (masúr), over which cotton wool is bound. Every day the eye is steamed with the fumes of heated "Ber," charcoal, and for seven days the diet is limited to clarified butter, sugar, wheat flour, pulse, and the sweetmeat batásá, while, should inflammation threaten, the actual cautery is applied to the temple. On the seventh day after the operation the patient is permitted to eat the head of a Rohú fish, but until the expiration of a month he is not allowed to resume his usual diet.

The head of this family, Shaikh Lakhú, is very successful in operating, and several well-known residents of Dacca, besides members of the Rájah of Tipperah's family, owe the almost perfect eyesight, which they now enjoy, to his skill.

The only other disease operated on by these oculists is Pterygium (nákhuna), a very common affection in Eastern

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[1] This operation was practised in Madras last century. *See* Forbes' "Oriental Memoirs," vol. ii, 379.

[2] It must be made of equal parts of copper, brass, and iron.

Bengal. They raise the web with a curved needle, and snip it across with a pair of scissors.

Six or eight Muhammadan youths, learning to become oculists, are always to be found at Sholághar, who are taught in the following curious manner: First of all, they are trained to make straight cuts in a leaf with a lancet, and are then obliged to practise on the eyes of dead goats, and of the Rohú fish, the only animals procurable for this purpose in a Bengali village.

KÁGHÁZÍ.

There is a tradition current that the papermakers of Eastern Bengal were brought from Upper India in Nawábí days, and made to settle in the villages which they now occupy. Papermaking is exclusively a Mussulmán trade, carried on in the low-lying tracts of country where the plant used in the manufacture grows. Along the northern border of Bikrampúr papermakers are very numerous, and in a village called Arial Khán, between four and five hundred houses are occupied by these craftsmen.

The only plant in general use for the manufacture of paper is the white sorrel, or Sufaid Mesta (*Hibiscus sabdariffa*). Rags, or old paper, are never employed, but jute is occasionally, although its fibre is considered hard and brittle.

Mesta is usually planted as a hedge around plots of sugar-cane, or rice. Its growth is rapid, and it acts as a protection against wind and water. After being cut it is treated exactly like the jute plant, namely, steeped in water until the fibres separate easily. In the manufacture of paper the fibres are first of all immersed in shell lime dissolved in water, and after a few hours are taken out, dried, and placed under a "dhenkí," or pounder, where they are beaten into a pulp, the mass being then washed to get rid of any excess of lime. The paper being made is dried, and starch of Arwá rice, never "Kái," and often arsenic, are added, the latter to preserve it from the depredations of insects.

The market price of a *man* of Mesta fibre varies from forty-four to forty-eight anas, and from that about two hundred quires of paper can be made, but the quantity depends on the size of the paper. Three sizes are usually made, which sell for sixteen, twenty-four, and thirty-two anas the twenty quires.

In former days the "Dhenkí" was worshipped, and the iron-shod pestle was constantly smeared with red lead; but now such mummeries are regarded as impious. Karámat 'Alí having preached among them, the papermakers are now most bigoted Farazís. The Dhenkí-shed being generally erected outside the mat walls of the dwelling-house, the females of the family do not work it, but stay within doors attending to household duties, and embroidering muslins.

KALWÁR.

Although often notorious drunkards themselves, each of the Mughal emperors issued on his accession an edict forbidding any person to make, or sell, wine or any intoxicating liquor. No Muhammadan could then personally retail spirits, but at present in Dacca six or seven men, natives of Mymensingh, are employed by Hindu Sahas as distillers. They are outcasts, and are not allowed by other classes of Muhammadans to eat, drink, or intermarry with them. If addressed as Kalwár, or "Sharáb-wálah," they are offended; but are satisfied if called Kárígar or Mistarí.

There are five licensed stills working daily in the city of Dacca, where the common "Bengala Sharáb" is manufactured as follows: Rice and water are boiled, and a ferment, called "Bákhar,"[1] imported from hill Tipperah, is added. After standing three days water and molasses are poured in, and the liquid, being placed in a covered jar (Matká), is put aside for twenty-five or thirty days. Afterwards it is heated in a copper still (Bhaṭhí), leading from which are two pipes, or worms, kept cool by the frequent application of cold water. The cost of manufacture is small, and no capital is required for carrying on a distillery of this primitive character. Bákhar, sold in round white balls, only costs a rupee a thousand. Wholesale dealers charge fourteen anas for a quart of this spirit, but the retailer, by dilution with water, can afford to sell it for twelve.

It is not by the rich that this spirit is consumed, but by the dissipated idlers so numerous in old Muhammadan cities, and by the dissolute Dosádh and Chamár. The higher class of Muhammadans, who do indulge in the forbidden luxury, prefer English beer, brandy, or one of the strong liqueurs. Young Bengal fancies champagne, port wine, or brandy, much of which is undoubtedly manufactured by enterprising Babús in the back slums of Calcutta.

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[1] Bákhar is prepared with Atub rice steeped in water and strained. To this is added ginger, pepper, and the leaves of divers jungle plants, which grow on the hills of Tipperah. It is than made like the spongy cake Batásá and dried in the sun. *See* Buchanan's "Eastern India," vol. iii, ch. 2.

Natives point to the existence of these licensed distillers as the cause of the increased indulgence in spirits of the present day, but they overlook the fact that there are causes at work, throughout the length and breadth of the land, such as education and facility of locomotion, which are revolutionising the faiths, thoughts, and habits of the people, and which must be regarded as the temporary causes of the moral decadence of their countrymen generally, and of residents of towns in particular. Under the Muhammadan Government a special officer, the "Muhtasib," was employed to take cognizance of drunkenness, and of the vending of spirituous liquors and intoxicating drugs, but he never succeeded in putting a stop to drinking, which was always a venial offence in the eyes of the Mughals.

KASÁÍ.

Muhammad butchers are subdivided into Bakrí-Kasáí, or goat killers, and Goru-Kasáí, or cow killers. The latter were formerly regarded as a degraded race, but of late years the two classes have united and freely intermarry. They are all followers of Maulaví Karámat 'Alí, and are very bigoted, eating with the Kúṭí, but refusing to sit down with the sweeper, Kichak, or Bediyá. Their only title is Mihtar; and their headman, or Sardár, has under him a Náib or A'mín.

Before slaughtering an animal the butcher repeats three times "Bismillah Allah Akbar," and, if uttered with proper reverence, he is exonerated from the guilt of shedding blood. The Kasáí will not skin an animal which has died from natural causes, this he leaves to the Rishí; and in inland villages he trades in skins, there being little demand for animal food. In towns they cure skins, and sell them to the Chamṛa-farosh; fat they clean and give to the soap-makers; horn to the comb-makers; and sinews (paṛhí) to the Rishí and Dhuniyá for strings of musical instruments and carding machines.

The female members of Kasáí families not being allowed out of doors are famous needle women, and earn money by embroidering muslin.

KATHAK, KATHAKA.

This, the Sanskrit name for a singer or reader, of the Puránas, is usually applied to a musician, of any creed or caste, who plays on the violin (Sárangí). A Chhetrí Kathak of Dacca goes about with a band of Muhammadan dancing boys (Bhagtiyá), but none of his class will condescend to play an accompaniment to Muhammadan dancing girls (Báí).

KHWÁND-KÁR.

The Khwánd-Kár is a teacher, or reader, in the Persian language, but in Eastern Bengal he performs for the lower classes divers abnormal duties, originating in the corrupt and Hinduized Muhammadanism of India. He is often styled the Murshíd, or religious guide, and Akhúnd, or tutor. As a rule he is very illiterate and only able to read Arabic with difficulty, but he makes much of this smattering of knowledge. Thirty years ago they were important individuals, their services being in great demand, but the reformed teaching of modern times has been gradually undermining this influence, and they are now little respected, and seldom consulted. During the early years of this century, when Islám in Bengal was still paralyzed by the revolution that had occurred, the Khwánd-Kárs educated boys, instructing them in the rudiments of their religion. At the present day, however, Munshís generally teach children, although a Khwánd-Kár is often preferred by strict Muhammadans to instruct their children in the doctrines of the faith, and teach them the "Kalma," or confession of faith

This preceptor, moreover, makes Muríds, or disciples, exorcises persons possessed of devils, and cures diseases by preparing charms (ta'wíz); while many families consult him on all occasions of sickness; and his ability to relieve suffering is never for a moment questioned by women. Should a child be attacked by a fever, or convulsions, the father goes to the Khwánd-Kár and obtains a charm, usually consisting of a sentence of the Korán scribbled on a piece of paper, which is fastened to the child's hair, or arm, or the Khwánd-Kár mumbling a few sentences from the same book, blows into a cup of water and gives it to the father as a medicinal draught. Parents put implicit faith in the efficacy of these charms, and every Muhammadan can relate wonderful cures effected by them. It is said that if an adult, disabled by a neuralgic or rheumatic pain, drinks water in which the written charm of a Khwánd-Kár has been dipped, immediate relief is procured, and no native will deny the possibility of this occurring.

Of old, in the city of Sunárgaon resided a celebrated family of Khwánd-Kárs who were often Faqírs, and whose power ('Amal) over spirits and París was unequalled, but nowadays their descendants have fallen into deserved contempt, because when summoned, the spirits no longer appear.

KOFT-GAR.

The art of inlaying gold, or silver, on iron is gradually becoming extinct, and instead of twenty houses as formerly, the city of Dacca at the present day only possesses two or three families, all of whom are natives of Laskarpúr in Silhet. In former days their ornamented shields and sword-hilts were greatly admired; but now, with an amalgam of silver and mercury they inlay pipes, perfume-boxes ('Atardán), and Pándáns which are commended by natives.

KOLÚ.

This is a very prosperous trade in Eastern Bengal, and in parts of the country the Kolús form large village communities.

The Kolú is the Muhammadan, Telí the Hindu, oilman. Of late years, however, Kolús who have become affluent, and able to keep servants to work for them, have assumed the name of Telí, and are gradually withdrawing from their brethren who labour with their own hands. The Kolú belongs to a very low class, being unable to marry out of his own set. He is narrow-minded, a bigoted Farazí, and a despiser of all classes who follow the practices of their forefathers. In the city of Dacca their headman is called Parámánik, and the only honorary titles among them are Chaudharí and Bepárí.

In Mymensingh there is a class of Kolús known as "Búk-Kolús," who, instead of employing cattle, turn the mill themselves, and are popularly believed to harness their shrewish wives to the mill, whenever they turn restive.

The Kolú manufactures oil from all kinds of seed, but will only express it in the "Kolhu," or oil mill. He feeds his cattle with the refuse, but the refuse of mustard seed (Khalí) is sold to the Baráí for manure, while that of Til (Sesamum) is valuable for sugar-cane fields.

The Kolú also prepares cocoa-nut oil with the kernels purchased from the Chuṭkí.

KUNDAKAR.

This is the Bengali term for a turner, and is used in Dacca instead of the Arabic "Kharrát" to designate workers in horn, or horners, who are always Muhammadans, though not forming a separate qaum or class. They despise and will not intermarry with the Kasáí, or Kúṭí subdivision.

These workmen soften the horns of cattle and buffaloes by fire, and then flatten them beneath heavy weights; but ivory and deers' horns are sawn into the requisite shape without any preparation. The Kundakar manufactures combs, which in Hindustan is the trade of the Mochí, pegs for pattens, small boxes (Ḍibiyás) for storing medicines, and nicknacks of various kinds.

KUNJRÁ.

This is the correct name for a Muhammadan fruiterer, but in Dacca it is used as a term of abuse, and the fruit sellers call themselves Mewá-farosh, Sabzí-farosh, or simply Bepárí. They import fruits from other districts, oranges from Silhet, mangoes from Maldah, and sell citrons, limes, and plantains, but never vegetables. The Hindu Kunjṛá, who may belong to any low Ṣúdra caste, deals in vegetables and fruits grown in the suburbs of the city.

The real Mewá-farosh, however, is the wandering Kábulí trader, who penetrates into the most remote corners of Bengal, and offers for sale grapes, apples, pomegranates, pistachio nuts, and occasionally the luscious musk melon (Sardá).

Fruit grown in Eastern Bengal is very inferior to that of Hindustan. The plantains, especially the richly flavoured "Amṛita ságar," are, however, unsurpassed by those of any other country. Mangoes still suffer from the curse of a holy man, and no one is able to prevent their being tunnelled through and through by a small weevil.

The insipid Makhánna (*Euryale ferox*), dry, tasteless melons, and sour plums, are eaten in enormous quantities by the lower classes.

KÚṬÍ.

This subdivision of Muhammadans derive their name from the Hindustani verb "Kúṭna," to pound, or beat. They are regarded as a most degraded class, it being the popular belief that a few generations ago they seceded and joined the ranks of Islám, while, like all new converts, they are most intolerant, assuming to be stricter and more orthodox than their neighbours, and, regarding the European with suspicion, if not hatred, they rarely salaam as he passes. They are either followers of Dúdhú Míyán, or of Maulaví Karámat 'Alí, and, although punctilious in their religious duties out of doors, cling to many Hindu superstitions. In October they worship the Dhenkí used for husking grain, at the same time making offerings to Lakshmí, the goddess of plenty, and every morning bowing thrice before it; while nothing, according to them, is more ominous of evil than for a stranger to sit down, or rest his foot on it. When smallpox attacks their families the Sítala pújah is observed, the same offerings being made to the goddess as among Hindus.

This large subdivision has separated into three classes, who intermarry and hold social intercourse with each other, being named:

Pánw Kúṭí.
Háth Kúṭí.
Chuṭkí Kúṭí.

The Pánw Kúṭí, by far the most numerous, work at any trade, discharging in villages even the menial duty of scavengering. They are masons, thatchers, goldsmiths, boatmen, water-carriers, but their principal occupation is husking rice. Bepárí is their ordinary title, while those who are expert at weighing grain are called "Kayyál," a name identical with the Dánḍí-dár, or weighman, of the Commissariat department.

The wives of the Kúṭí alone among Mussulmán women appear unveiled in public, making purchases in the Bazár, fetching water from the river, and boiling and husking rice in the open air. Among the richer families the women are expert workers of Kashída cloth, and often take service as wet nurses.

No respectable Muhammadan will marry, eat, or associate with the Kúṭí, although they are admitted into the public Mosques, and buried in the public graveyard.

The Pánw Kúṭí have a Pancháít of their own, like any Hindu caste, and a headman called Sardár.

The Háth Kúṭí, again, pounds bricks for road metal with an iron pestle or mallet, and makes "Surkhí" for mortar. This subdivision is a small one, and is being gradually absorbed by the first.

According to Buchanan, the Chuṭkí probably derived the name from carrying about samples, or a pinch (chuṭkí), of rice to show the quality of the whole, and as all Kúṭís deal in rice the designation was applied to them collectively. At the present day, however, the usual occupation of the Chuṭkí is extracting the kernel of the cocoa-nut for the manufacture of oil, and polishing the shells for smoking purposes. Cocoa-nuts arrive in Dacca without their husks, which are exported by the growers to Calcutta for making coir ropes and mats. The common varieties of the nut are Jahází, the most highly prized, imported into Calcutta from the south of India; Kanchanpária from Noacolly; and Desí, or Bháṭhiyárí from Báqirganj. In the jungles of Bhowál a peculiar nut of a reddish colour, known as Sharmaniya, highly valued for its shape, is found.

A cocoa-nut tapering like a flower bud, hence called Kalí, is preferred by all natives for smoking through, and one symmetrically formed will often fetch as much as sixteen rupees. The Chuṭkí are, however, very cunning workmen, and by judicious paring often transform an ill-shapen nut into a shapely one, but the thinness of the shell can be easily detected by the experienced buyer.

It is not improbable that the great Kúṭí subdivision of to-day is an offshoot of the Chaṇḍál race, and it is a remarkable fact that Kúṭís and Chaṇḍáls annually compete in boat races on the popular Shashṭhí Pújah, a circumstance which would account for their low rank among Muhammadans.

LAKAṚ-HÁRA. LAKṚI-WÁLÁH.

The men engaged in this trade are usually Kúṭí Muhammadans, who advance money to woodcutters, generally Chaṇḍáls, for the supply of firewood, which is brought into Dacca from the jungles of Bhowál. Timber dealers, or Maháajans, are quite distinct, being traders who engage men to proceed to the Morang, or Taráí, for logs of wood, and on its arrival sell it to carpenters and boat builders.

LOHÁR.

The Muhammadan blacksmith combines the trade of the carpenter and gunsmith, making gun stocks and locks, but importing the barrels from Mungír, the Birmingham of Eastern India.

He is generally licensed to sell powder and shot, the latter being made by himself in a very primitive manner. Lead is beaten into a rod of the requisite thickness, pieces are then cut off and rolled on a stone, until they assume a spherical form.

MADAD-WÁLAH.

Madad was prepared and sold by Muhammadans long before Chandú was known; but at the present day the Chandú-Wálah, who is expert in preparing opium in all forms, is the only person who makes and retails it.

Madad is prepared as follows. Crude opium is boiled in a pan into which one end of a hempen wisp is put, while the other is dropped into an empty pot. The boiling liquid is then gradually strained off, the hemp retaining all sedimentary matters. It is afterwards allowed to cool, and reboiled, when Pân leaves moistened and made crisp by a dry heat are thrown in fine pieces into the decoction. By means of two sticks the chopped leaves are thoroughly mixed with the opium, and as the liquid congeals each fragment of leaf has a small quantity of opium adherring to it, which being removed and made into balls the size of small bullets, are wrapped in fine paper and sold for one paisa each.

The method of smoking Madad is quite different from that of Chandú. The smoker puts a ball into a broken pipe bowl, and with a pair of bamboo pincers applies live charcoal, while, as the opium burns, he rapidly inhales the smoke. To prevent his losing any of the effects, the inveterate smoker keeps in his mouth a sweetmeat, or a pith drop soaked in syrup. After taking two or three pipes of Madad the seasoned smoker indulges in a pipe of tobacco, by so doing heightening and prolonging the reverie.

Shops for the sale and smoking of Madad are to be met with in all the villages of the interior; but in the city of Dacca its use is confined to private houses.

MÁHÍ-FAROSH.

Muhammadan fishmongers are also called Nikarí, a word of doubtful origin.[1]

Excepting in Silhet, no Mussulmán of Eastern Bengal earns a livelihood as a fisherman. This prejudice appears to be general throughout the Muhammadan world. Burckhardt does mention Bedouin fishermen on the coast of the Red Sea, but at Constantinople the fishermen are poor Bulgarians, while the farmer of the fishery is always a Turk. In Sindh, the Mohana, a fisher tribe, though now Muhammadan, was formerly a vile Hindu one.

In Hindustan, a Mussulmán may often be seen angling, or throwing a casting net, but the fish caught are for home use, and are never sold. This objection, in India at least, seems to be of Buddhist origin, and all fisher castes are still regarded as belonging to one of the lowest grades of humanity, being generally remnants of aboriginal, or outcast, tribes who lived separate from, and stranger to, the Aryan population around them. There is, therefore, little doubt that the Máhí-farosh of to-day represents a Hindu fisher caste converted to Islám.

The Máhí-farosh division is a very exclusive one, and in the city of Dacca includes only about eighty families, who intermarry among themselves, and shut out from social intercourse any member who marries into another class. This in-breeding probably explains the fact that they are yearly decreasing, and now number only an eighth of what they formerly did. The name Nikarí, regarded as an opprobrious one, is generally applied to the Kaibartta fishmonger. Of old, the Máhí-farosh farmed the river fisheries, but this being found unremunerative, they, nowadays, occasionally make advances to the fishermen, but the rule is to pay for large fish when brought to market, and for small ones every ten or fifteen days, at so much a basket.

The Máhí-farosh have no objections to pray with, to eat or drink in the houses of all other Muhammadan citizens, but they are seldom given an opportunity. In each quarter of the city where they reside, a headman or Mu'tabar governs, and an Union or *dal*, presided over by a Parámánik, is established.

The Máhí-farosh, moreover, is often a fish curer. During the cold weather, traders of this name from Húglí visit Eastern Bengal, and lease a piece of land on the bank of a river, where they dry fish in the sun. Fish, generally the "Potí" (*Cyprinus Chyssoparcius*), are bought from the Tíyars at the rate of two and a half creels a rupee. The fish are spread on the bank, protected by nets from the kites and crows, and after being exposed from ten to fifteen days "until the oil disappears," are shipped on board boats, and considered fit for use. In private houses, the *sukhtí*, or dried fish, as it is called, is either sprinkled with salt, or packed in an earthen vessel, and during the rains, when fish are dear, this unsavoury mess, after being roasted and pounded, is mixed with onions, chillies, pepper and oil, and called *bartá*, a favourite relish when eaten with curry.

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[1] Perhaps Sanskrit Nikara, a heap or pile.

The large kinds of fish, such as "bhikṭhí," "rohú" and "hilsa," after being cleaned and sliced are salted and dried under pressure.

MAHOUT, MAHÁWAT.

The Mahout, or elephant keeper, also known by the Persian name Fíl-bán, is in most instances a Muhammadan. During the wars of Sabuktigín in the tenth century of our era, Mahouts were always Hindus; and at the present day a few borne on the establishments of Hindu Zamíndárs are Chaṇḍáls. It is stated by a great authority,[1] that Mahouts are now almost invariably Sayyids, or if not Sayyids are addressed as such. At Dacca, however, where the government Khedáh establishment has been stationed for many years, Mahouts never claim to have Sayyid blood, and are never accosetd by that honoured title. On the contrary, they are of low plebeian families, and their hard and venturesome lives are passed in reckless dissipation and in excessive indulgence in opium, Gánjha, and spirits. The ordinary titles among them are Jamádár and Sardár.

Dacca Mahouts never heard of giving elephants "certain drugs mixed up with the wax of the human ear"[2] to make them quarrelsome and pugnacious; but they state that if an issue be made over each temple and a clove inserted, this effect is produced.

MÁLÍ.

Muhammadan gardeners are numerous in Dacca, being engaged in cultivating flowering plants and selling them in the markets. They look down on kitchen gardeners, and would fall in social estimation if they adopted that occupation. These florists confine their attention to growing various kinds of Jasmine (júhí, chambelí and belá); cockscombs (jatá-dharí); marigolds (gendá), and roses. The Hibiscus, regarded by Hindus as an unlucky flower, is, according to Muhammadans, enchanted, and if placed in a room, or offered to any one, the offence is resented as an attempt to bewitch and injure the individual.

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[1] "History of India," Sir H. Elliot, vol. ii, 143.
[2] "Mrs. Mír Hasan 'Alí," vol. ii, 30.

The Málí prepare the different kinds of garlands (sihrá) and chaplets worn by Mussulmán ladies, who may be seen in the recesses of the Zanánah with their arms, necks, bodies, and even ankles bedecked with wreaths of fragrant flowers; while gentlemen usually have a nosegay of Jasmine encircling the mouthpiece and stem of their pipes.

Like the Hindu Málákárs, the Málí manufactures pith pendants (jara), with which, at certain seasons, houses, shops, boats, and the tombs of holy men are adorned.

MÍRÁṢAN.

These women occupy in Bengal the same position as the Domní do in Hindustan. They are generally poor Muhammadan widows, who sing in Zanánas to the accompaniment of a drum and cymbals, and often dress in character, but never dance. They are said to be respectable in their lives, and are in great request among the higher ranks of native society.

In Eastern Bengal the husbands and male relatives of these women are never met with. In different parts of India, Mirásí is used as a synonym for Dôm, and it is probable that these Muhammadan women are representatives of one of the sweeper, or helot, races converted to Islám.

MÍSÍ-WÁLÁH.

This Muhammadan shopkeeper makes and sells dentifrices and dyes for the teeth. To stain the teeth being considered by Bengali men an effeminate habit, is as provocative of banter as dyeing the hair is among middle-aged men in Europe; but Hindu and Muhammadan women generally practise it, as in their eyes well blackened teeth add a beauty to the expression. The ordinary dye is prepared with gall-nut, iron filings, sulphate of iron, myrobalan (harrá) and sappan wood (táí), magenta powder being generally added instead of red ochre as formerly.

The Mísí-wálí, who sells dyes in Zanánas and private houses, has the reputation, like the Chúṛí wálí, of being a great intriguante, and many marriages and illicit loves are traced to her.

Dentifrices (manjan) are also retailed by the Mísí-wálah, those in common use consisting of charred almond shells, camphor, and aromatics; while by others charred betle nut, or the powdered charcoal that forms in the interior of the tobacco pipe, is preferred.

In the shop is also sold the collyrium (surma) made from an ore of lead in universal use throughout the East for tingeing the eyelids. Muhammadan females invariably apply it, while Muhammadan as well as Hindu males use it to strengthen the eyes. In every house there is a Surma-dán made of china, stone, or wood, in which the collyrium is stored, resembling in shape an air-tight capped bottle for gum, and containing instead of a brush a leaden probe (siláí) for smearing the eye salve along the edges of the eyelids.

Hindu females, however, prefer "Kajjal," or lamp black, each house having its Kajlauṭí, or iron snuffers-shaped vessel for preparing it. A wick of Ajwáin (Ligusticum Ajowan) put into a vessel of oil is lighted, while the Kajlauṭí being held above the flame, soot is deposited, and being collected is applied to the eyelids with the finger.

MUÇAWWIR.

Portrait painting has never reached even a tolerable state of excellence in India. By strict Muhammadans it is considered sinful to sit for, or portray, a likeness. Copyists, who have acquired a wonderful skill in transferring to ivory the lineaments of a photograph, or an oil painting, are to be found in Delhi and other cities, but to paint from life is a talent rarely met with. In Dacca there is a Muhammadan family, who by birth are painters, but their pictures, wanting in animation and individuality, bear nevertheless a fair but formal likeness of the person delineated.

MULLÁ.

The Mullá, more generally known by the less pretentious title of Ṭálib-ul-'ilm, or the searcher after knowledge, either resides in a Mosque supported by the inhabitants around, or lodges in the house of some respectable Muhammadan. He teaches boys the Arabic alphabet, and, when this is mastered, the Âm-sipára, or last of the thirty sections of the Korán; the pupil having advanced thus far has the Korán recited, but seldom explained, as the teacher's knowledge of Arabic is superficial, and for doing this the Mullá receives from four to eight anas a month from each pupil. When he resides in a Mosque the Mullá proclaims the Azán, or summons to prayer; and occasionally leads the public service in the absence of the Farazí Maulaví, who usually officiates. In former times the Mullá was engaged as the Qárí, or reader of the Fátiha over the graves of deceased relatives; but of late this practice has been dying out.

When a Mullá is a man of ability, and has mastered Muhammadan science and philosophy, he is known as "Maulánáh." In the city of Dacca there are two celebrated philosophers who instruct youths gratis, receiving, however, presents at the great yearly festivals. The one, Mauláná-ud-dín Muhammad, resides in a Mosque and is deeply read in logic and philosophy; the other, Mauláná Na'man, is a bookseller distinguished for his profound knowledge of sciences.

MUNSHÍ.

The Munshí is a teacher of languages instructing boys in Arabic, Persian, and Hindustaní. When a boy has completed his studies with a Mullá, he joins a class taught by a Munshí, and pays from one to two rupees a month.

The works ordinarily read in the vernacular classes of Eastern Bengal are the following:—

Sháh-námah of Firdausí.
Pandnámah or Karímá } of Sa'dí.
Gulistán .. .. } of Sa'dí.
Bostán .. .. } of Sa'dí.
Mahábat-námah of Jámí.
Sikandar-námah of Nizámí Ganjarwání.
Bahár-dánish of Munshí Ináyatullah of Dilhi.
Anwár-i-Suhailí (Pilpay's fables) by Husain Vaiz Káshifí.
Maktúbát-i-'Allámí, or 'Allámí of Abúlfazl.
Riq'at Alamgírí.

MURGHÍ-WÁLÁH, MURGH-BÁN.

All Muhammadans keep domestic fowls, but no Hindu, unless of the very lowest caste, will do so. The Murghí-wálah buys fowls, geese, and ducks at village fairs, and, when fattened, sells them in the towns. Muhammadans, again, are the only natives who make capons (Khaçiyá), hence the Hindus nickname such persons Más-Káṭa, flesh-cutters, a name also applied to the Hajjám.

NAICHA-BAND.

The makers of huqqá snakes carry on one of the busiest and most paying occupations of the present day, there being about a hundred houses of them in the city of Dacca alone.

The common "naicha" used by four-fifths of the population comes ready made from Silhet, whence most of the Naicha-bands also come. The woods used in their manufacture are Sisú, Jám, Járral, and Semal. The wood is hollowed by means of a long iron borer, then fixed in a lathe and turned. The rich often have pipe stems made of ebony (Ábnús).

Naichas, or snakes, are of different shapes. The most common are the Pechwán, or twisted; the Ḍerh-kham with one and a-half turns, the Sattar-kham with many coils; and the Kohní-dár with a joint in the middle.

A naicha is made as follows: Where the bends are a spiral, zinc wire is introduced and strengthened by iron bands, or by splinters of bamboo. If the snake is for a rich person, fine birch bark, Bhúrja-pattra (Betula bhurja), is bound over this; if for a poor man, a leaf known as "Kínaj-pattá," imported from Silhet, is used instead. Common red cloth (sálú), or variegated strips of cloth, are wound round the tube according to the fancy of the buyer.

Naichas often get names from the materials of which they are made, some smokers fancying "Kus-kus" on the outside of the tube, which, being moistened, cools the smoke as it is inhaled. Others have the snake ornamented with beads, silver wire, or precious stones.

The common wooden naicha costs from two to three anas, while that bound with kus-kus fetches from two to three rupees, and those with gold or silver from ten to twenty rupees.

In Eastern Bengal the different parts of the Huqqá are the Gurguṛí or Fárṣiya, made of silver, Bidrí, or glass, for holding the rosewater; the Suráhí, which passes into the rosewater and has its end cut slantingly; and the gaṭṭá, or knob, where the naicha, or khama, joins. At this joint a plate of zinc with two holes in it is so fastened as to prevent the issue of smoke. The Munh-nál, or mouthpiece, is as a rule made of silver.[1] On the top of the Suráhí is placed the "'Araq-dán" to catch the tobacco juice; while above this is the Chilam, or pipe bowl, with its ornamented filagree cover, or sarposh.

The profession of a Naicha-band is a most respected one, and is esteemed as equal to that of the Rangrez, and it often happens that one member of a family is a dyer, while another is a huqqá snake maker.

NÁL-BAND.

The Hindu Kamár is the maker of horse shoes, the Muhammadan Nál-band is the farrier, paring the horse's hoofs, and fastening on the shoes.

Nál-bands know nothing of the veterinary art, and the only persons, who pretend to any skill in treating diseases of horses, are superannuated coachmen and syces. The Sálotar, or Baiṭar, was a recognized member of the military establishment under the Muhammadan kings, and several works, famous in their day, were written on veterinary medicine, but none are in use at present in Bengal.

NÁN-BAÍ, ROṬI-WÁLAH.

These are different descriptions of Muhammadan bakers; the former being also a pastry-cook.

The Nán-báí uses leaven (máya) prepared with Tayir,[2] acidulated milk, to which cocoa-nut milk, wheat flour, and spices are added. These ingredients being well kneaded are wrapped in a cloth, and kept in a warm place till required. He bakes several kinds of bread, such as Báqir-Kháni, Shír-mál, Panja-Kash, and Nán-Khaṭáí; and makes Kulícha, or scones, Paráṭha, an indigestible piecrust, and, of late years, English biscuits.

The Nán-bái is also a cook providing for dinner parties at his shop, or house, and his bill of fare includes a delicious, richly-flavoured curry, Kofta, or pounded meat, roasts, and puláos. Afgháns, and other travellers, obtain their meals at his shop for so much a head; but the dinner is *à la carte.* He often, too, lets lodgings to those who prefer a quiet room to a noisy, dirty inn.

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[1] In Upper India the mouthpiece is often made of jade or bloodstone.

[2] Tayir is Tamil for curds, and, according to Dr. Caldwell, belongs to the West Indo-European family of words. How comes it to be in general use in Eastern Bengal? Was it like Tope, a grove of trees, and Topas, a native Christian, introduced from Madras by the English?

Taking him for all in all there is no more jovial and entertaining character than the baker, the barber being his only rival. The former naturally finds it easier to secure popularity by ministering to the creature comforts of his customers than the latter, who only has to depend on his ready wit, and conversational talent, for causing his clients to forget the blunt edge of his razor.

The Rotí-wálah, again, makes bread according to the English method, his ferment being toddy (Táṛi), and from using this unholy liquor his bread is not in so much request as the badly baked and doughy article prepared by the Nán-báí. The oven of the Roti-wálah is always above ground, while that of the Nán-báí is either sunk beneath the surface or covered over with mud. English bread is known as Páo-roṭí, as each loaf weighs half a pound, or a quarter (páo) of a Sér.

The Roṭí-wálah also makes Samosa, a three-cornered pâté, or pasty, of minced meat, as well as the piecrust seen on many European tables.

With the exception of pork and the flesh of turtles, Muhammadans eat all manner of meat, properly killed. It is cooked by the Nán-báí in the following ways:—

Kabábi—plain roast.
Koftá—hashed or pounded, and fried in Ghí.
Qaliyá—broiled, and served up with curry (Sálan) and vegetables.
Qormá—soaked in curds, and cooked with Ghí and hot spices.
Do-piyáza—a stew or curry, made with Ghí, onions, and rich spices.

NARDIYÁ.

In Bihár this workman is known as "Párcha-Kash." When muslin has been washed and calendered by the Kundígar, it is sent to the Muhammadan Nardiyá, who, with a comb made of rattan thorns, arranges and disentangles the threads. He then winds the web on a bamboo reel (Nard), and subsequently unrolling and folding the cloth despatches it to the Sankha-wálah, also a Muhammadan, and generally a Kúṭí, who places it on a flat board and glazes it by friction with a chank shell.

NÍLGAR.

This profession, quite distinct from that of the Rangrez, is followed by a low class of Muhammadans, and in Dacca only three or four families of them are to be met with.

Indigo is the only dye they use, and after pounding the colour very fine, it is dissolved in water in a large earthen vessel (Matká) half sunk in the ground. Lime, fuller's earth, and the seeds of a leguminous plant, called "Chokar," bought from the Chamáín women, are added. This lye, on standing, ferments, and the dye is then ready for use. The Nílgar dyes cloth and thread, and so long as any colour remains in the vat, goes on using the liquid, regardless of the shade of blue imparted.

There is a well known proverb in India, employed to express the fickleness of fortune which is derived from this trade: "Níl ka máth bigar giya," literally, "The Indigo vat has been spoiled." The Nílgar believes that when dye has been accidentally damaged, he has only to tell some miraculous, or incredible, story and it will be rectified. So, whenever a Munchausen tells a story, this proverb is repeated by the listener to politely express doubts of its truth.

OJHÁ.

As the Roman haruspex was named from his examining the entrails of the victim, so the Indian diviner is called from his inspecting the "Ojh" or entrails of his sacrifice. At the present day, however, they have discontinued this art, and each man adopts that system which is most likely to gull the populace.

If a Muhammadan, he is known as Dú atí; if a Hindu, as Ojhá, Rojhá, or Gúnin.

No two wizards follow the same tactics. One possesses a root by which he can fascinate snakes, or protect from snake bites; another has a secret spell or charm to cure ophthalmia or headache; a third has a philter; while a fourth has an amulet of universal virtue.

The most celebrated wizard in Dacca at the present day is a Dôm, who has become a Muhammadan, called Bábú Khán. An Ojhá may belong to any caste, and he will not be less valued if he is a Dôm, or a sweeper.

This Bábú Khán derived his knowledge from a Faqír. He has met with so much success, and has acquired so great a name, that he has educated several pupils in his art. Being able to read and write a little Arabic, he has the reputation of being a profound scholar in all that concerns the black art.

He is chiefly employed in exorcising devils who have taken possession of any person. He invariably carries with him a copy of the Qúrán, and when he enters the room where the possessed person is confined, he begins by reciting a few appropriate texts. At the sound of these words the devil usually steals away; but if he is a powerful one, and disregards the words of the sacred volume, the book itself is exhibited, and he is warned to leave. If this too fails, a few sentences are scribbled on a piece of paper, and this is burned beneath the patient's nose. This, the Ojhá asserts, is an infallible cure.

A demoniac is known by the following signs: The eyeballs are bloodshot, the tongue protrudes, pain is not felt; if the person is weak unusual strength is displayed, and several men are required to hold him. He amuses himself in wandering about, muttering, and breaking all articles within his reach.

The belief in persons possessed by evil spirits is universal, and even educated Muhammadans do not dispute the possibility of such an occurrence. The delirium which often accompanies the hot stage of ague, especially in the case of girls, is always referred by the women of the Zanánah to the presence of a demon, and it is often difficult for a doctor to prevent their summoning a wizard to exorcise the sufferer. Hysteria, with its sudden seizure and strange involuntary convulsions, is a disorder in treating which the Ojhá acquires undeserved credit; but as long as the belief in demoniac possession lasts, the race of wizards will flourish.

When demons of ordinary power are in possession of a person, a favourite remedy is burning turmeric, mustard seeds, and chillies, and making the fumes be inhaled.

Whatever method be adopted to expel the devil, his return is easily prevented if a particular sentence of the Qúrán be worn as a talisman around the neck.

Other wizards draw magic circles around the demoniac, while incantations are read.

Most of these men pretend to have "Mantras," or spells to ward off or cure diseases. During difficult labour, a sentence of the Qúrán bound on the woman, or a draught of water into which an incantation has been blown, are certain to hasten the birth of the child. Another belief prevalent among all classes in Bengal, is the disastrous effect of the evil eye. Every mother spits on her child, or smears a little lamp-black on the child's face before allowing her darling to go out of doors. The wizards however, claim, by means of charms, to permanently protect children.

An Ojhá never marries, and he cannot allow anyone to cook his food. A person so familiar with the power of darkness must always be on his guard, lest some mischievous imp take possession of him.

Allied to the Ojhá is the Jhára-wáláh, or Jhárná-phúnkná-wáláh. Hindustánís are greater proficients in this imposture than the inhabitants of Bengal. Like the mesmerist, the Jhára-wáláh chiefly practices passes, or gentle shampooing, and while doing so he must not breathe. A deep inspiration is taken, and, while the rubbing lasts, he repeats an incantation to Kálí, the patroness of these wizards, and then blows on the limb that is under manipulation. A twig of the sacred Ním tree is often used in making passes. This order of wizards are chiefly employed in curing rheumatic or neuralgic pains; but, in 1872, they were in great demand to cure the obstinate muscular pains following an attack of Dengue fever.

At the end of the seventeeth century the miraculous cures performed by Mr. Greatrix,[1] the stroker, created much sensation in England. By stroking the seat of pain he could remove it at once, and effect a permanent cure. His practice was identical with that of the strokers of India of the present day.

PANÍR-WÁLAH.

Dacca has long been famous for its cheeses, although none are made in its neighbourhood. In the city, however, reside all the export traders, or Kárígars, who are either Hindus or Muhammadans.

The finest cheeses come from Sarrail in Silhet, and from Joan-Sháhí and Susang-Durgápúr, in Mymensingh, the pure water of the rivers in these districts being believed to bestow a peculiar richness on the milk.

Two kinds of cheese are made, the first, called "Dalama," or "Gáea," is prepared with cows' milk, and must be eaten when fresh; the other, "Panír," or "Bhainsa," is made of buffaloes' milk.

Hindus will not manufacture or eat cheese, because it is a heinous offence to add salt to milk; while to mix rennet with it is a deadly sin. Cheese making is therefore a Mussulmán trade, the maker proceeding as follows: he takes milk, curdles it with rennet (Máya), and, after allowing it to stand for some time, pours off the water. The curd being then cut into pieces, is placed in small baskets, and left to dry. During the first day the baskets are turned several times, and, after twenty-four hours, three or four holes are made in the cheese, into which salt is put, and the outside rubbed with brine. On the third day the cheese is turned over; on the fourth more salt is added, and it is then considered fit for use.

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[1] "Philosophical Transactions," vol. xxi, page 429.

PANKHÁ-WÁLÁH.

Fans are always manufactured by Muhammadans residing in outlying suburbs of the city, who are generally cultivators.

They make the large hand fan (Arání) with the leaves of the Palmyra palm, a smaller sort being made with the same leaf, and either left plain (sáda), or ornamented with gaudy colours and talc, hence its name of "Abraqí."

Occasionally Hindu Bairágís, who earn an uncertain livelihood by hawking execrable pictures of their gods, also make hand pankhás for sale.

PAṬWA.

This is the common name in Eastern Bengal for the Muhammadan who makes tapes and braids. In Hindustan, however, he is called by the Arabic names, Iláqaband, or Bisáṭí.

The Paṭwas are intelligent workmen and skilful dyers, who, in the days of the English factories, were famous for the manufacture of a lac dye, known as "*Jhúrí*."[1] The lac was first washed, mixed in a solution with Sajjí-maṭí, an impure alkali, then heated, powdered Lodh bark (*Symplocos racemosa*) being added, and after boiling a short time poured into a copper vessel and allowed to cool.

At the present day they impart a fixed golden colour to silk by straining lime and fuller's earth, and boiling them with "*Kamílá*" (*Rottleria tinctoria*); silk steeped in this, then washed and dried, acquires the above colour. Silk dipped in a solution of alum, and macerated in water in which chips of Jack-tree bark have been boiled, becomes yellow, and if afterwards immersed in indigo water, prepared by the Nílgar, it changes to a green colour.

The Paṭwa makes the Kardhaní, or waist string, worn by natives of all ranks and religions, which consists of coloured cotton string. He also manufactures tassels (Jhabbá) for caps, paijáma strings, nets, fringes, and silken purses; and stringing beads he makes silk borders for bracelets, armlets, and charms. In his shop are also procured the "*Baddhí,*" or sash, worn during the Muharram, and the "*Shamsa,*" or silken rosette, that adorns the gaudy wrappers of rich Muhammadans.

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[1] "Indian Repertory," vol. ii, 579.

The skilled Paṭwas, who are generally addressed as Kárígar, form a small community, occupying not more than twenty-five houses in the city of Dacca.

QALA'Í-GAR.

Muhammadans are the only natives who use copper vessels requiring tinning, the Hindus using either iron, brass, stone, or earthern cooking vessels. The furbishing trade is a busy one, there being at least twenty-five families in Dacca living by it.

The Qala'ígar prepares at his home a paste consisting of sal ammoniac boiled in water, in the proportion of one part to three. The copper vessel being first scoured with Jháma, or burnt brick, the paste is applied with a scrap of cotton, while with a heated iron the tin (qala'í) is coated over the inside and again rubbed with the paste.

Villagers usually bring their vessels with them to the city, but in the cold season the Qala'ígar makes a circuit through the interior, finding plenty of work.

RAFÚ-GAR.

Last century, it is said, that from five to six hundred Rafú-gars, or darners, found employment in the different European factories in and around Dacca, but now their number does not exceed a hundred and fifty. They have always been esteemed one of the most respectable classes of Muhammadans, their chief bearing the honorary title of "Mihtar Jí." Formerly, they never intermarried out of their own circle, but now, through poverty, are obliged to be less particular. The following curious custom is observed:—They instruct only the sons and grandsons of the male line in the mysteries of their handicraft, declining to teach their daughters' children; but so long as marriages were confined to their own clique this practice could have had little meaning. In former days an expert Rafú-gar earned from ten to twelve rupees a month; the less expert about eight. Their occupation was to examine the webs of muslin, and extract any threads that were broken, replacing them by new ones. This operation was called "Chunná," to pick, or choose. The Rafú-gar was a confirmed opium smoker, his skill being most striking when under the influence of that drug. The female Rafú-gar is often as dexterous as her husband, but she generally works at embroidery. Formerly the hemmer (Maghzí) was distinct from the darner, but now the Rafú-gar is reduced to hem as well as darn.

Closely connected with the darner was the "Purza-gar," generally a woman, who cut the threads connecting the flowers on Jamadání muslins, and arranged them on the reverse side of the cloth.

RAKHWAL

Is a Muhammadan cowherd hired by citizens, who keep milch cows, to take the cattle to the jungle daily, and bring them back in the evening. He receives two anas a month for each animal. In the villages Chandáls are the usual cowherds; but in families where there is either an old man, or an aged widow, unable to earn anything by labour, the cows are committed to their charge.

RANGREZ.

Dyeing is considered one of the most respectable trades in Dacca, the dyer being usually called Çáfí, pure, or clean, while Khalífa and Ustád are honorary titles among them. The Rangrez rarely marries out of his own class, and will have nothing to do with the Kúṭí, Chamṛa-farosh, or other low grades of his co-religionists.

Dyeing is still in its infancy in Bengal, and the colours given to cloth are most unstable. The chief dye is safflower, from which are derived two colours, "Gulábí," or damask, and "Gulnár," or scarlet, tints in great demand for colouring bridal dresses and turbans. By mixing safflower and turmeric, "Basantí," a colour worn by Krishna,[1] is produced. With indigo and Gulábí, a colour known as "Kásní" is made, and with indigo and turmeric a green dye, called "Sabzí." A purple dye, Baiganí, obtained from Sappan wood, is a favourite colour for dyeing silk garments much fancied by young Brahmans, and others. As these defective dyes disappear in a shower of rain, clothes have to be frequently returned to the Rangrez, who, in consequence, is one of the busiest of workmen.

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[1] Hence the common epithet Pítámbara, clad in yellow, in the same way as Balaráma is called Nílámbara, from wearing blue garments.

In former days each season had its particular coloured turbans, and the rich vied with one another in the showiness of their head-dresses. Basantí was, of course, the fashionable tint for spring, green being the orthodox colour for Muhammadans during the month of Muharram, as yellow is for the strict Hindus on the Janmáshṭami, or birthday of Krishna.

In dyeing portions of a pattern, or imitating in colours the outlines of plants and animals, the Rangrez sews on different shaped pieces of cloth, but when a wavy stripe on a coloured ground is required he merely stitches the cloth into folds. This mode of dyeing is called "Chunrí."

RAZ.

In Bengal, the mason, bricklayer, and plasterer are names of the same person, who generally belongs to the Kúṭí division, and though low in the social scale he will neither prepare mortar, nor act as hodman. The man or boy who prepares mortar, usually an apprentice, is called "Jogária," while the hodman is known as the "Tagháríya," from the hod which he carries. A woman occasionally takes the place of the latter, being designated the "Mihtaráni." Ustádgar is the ordinary title of masons, a class of workmen who will put their hands to almost anything. As occasion offers, they become traders, day labourers, or brickmakers; but this last occupation is usually left to the Kumhárs and Chanḍáls. Moulds for making bricks were formerly unknown, but of late years have been universally adopted. By the older method, the bricklayer merely flattened the clay to the proper thickness, drew lines according to the size wanted, and then cut off the pieces of clay. Ornamental bricks, and small sized tiles, called, "Ja'farí" or "Mirzá Ja'farí," are also manufactured by the Ráz, and are employed in making cornices and eaves.

Traders in lime (Chúná-wáláh) belong to any caste or race, slaked lime being imported by them from Silhet.

At the present day skilled masons earn from nine to fifteen rupees a month; the hodman about six, and the "Jogária" about four.

REZA.[1]

This is the name of children employed in beating concrete roofs and verandahs with a wooden mallet, "Píṭní" or "Reza." They are always Muhammadans, usually belonging to Kúṭí families. These children are supervised by the mason, while their beating is regulated by a woman called Shariyárí in Bengal, Kamín in Hindustan. She recites indecent songs while the Reza beat time with their mallets.

ÇÁBUN-WÁLAH.

Soap was unknown to the ancient Hindus, who used as detergents Sarjiká or Sajji-maṭi, an impure carbonate of soda, and Besán or peasemeal.[2] Soap is one of the chief exports from Dacca, and it is highly esteemed throughout Bengal, at Penang, and the Malay Archipelago.

Soap is manufactured as follows: Eighty pounds of flat (Pattá) and forty of broken (Chúr) Sajji-maṭi are mixed in water with sixty pounds of shell lime, and as the solution is poured off water is added until all the salts are dissolved. Animal suet and Til oil are then mixed in varying quantities in a large vat, and slowly heated, the weaker lye being gradually added until an uniform mass is obtained. The fire is then extinguished, and the soap within a few days solidifies. The strained sediment is removed to another vat, where it is mixed with the stronger lye, called Tezí. After a second boiling, the common soap is fit for the market, but if an article of prime quality is wanted, three or even four boilings are necessary. The manufacture of good soap takes from fifteen to thirty days.

SÁDA-KÁR

Is a Muhammadan silversmith, who manufactures silver rings, gold ones not being usually worn by the lower classes. The onyx (Sulaimání), the salmon-tinted ('Aqíq), and yellow

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[1] Reza in Persian signifies a bit, or portion; and as children only receive a part of a man's pay, the word is used to designate workmen receiving less than an adult's pay.

[2] Other vegetable detergents were also in use, such as Arishṭa, Phenila, or Soap-nut (*Sapindus detergens*), Ríṭhá (*Sapindus saponaria*), and Khalí, oilcake.

(Sharbatí) carnelian are the favourite stones with Muhammadan men; and the Sádakár fixes these in rings with lac, and then turns in the bevelled edge of the setting.

Within the last few years several of the Kúṭí class, known as Muhammadan Sonárs, have become expert goldsmiths, competing on equal terms with the Hindu in the finest filagree work.

ÇAIQAL-GAR

Is a Muhammadan who polishes iron weapons and brass utensils with emery, or pumice stone (Jháma); he furbishes swords, pistols, guns, knives, and scissors, and scours brass vessels and ornaments. In the cold season he visits the inland villages, while the Muhammadan villagers bring with them any articles requiring polishing whenever they come to the city. The Çaiqal-gar also paints or gilds chairs and boxes, and he is often expert at lacquering chairs and tables.

SANG-GAR.

This is a Muhammadan trade distinct from the Sang-tarásh, or stonecutter of Bihár, and the Çaiqalgar of Bengal. He is a cutler who sharpens agricultural implements, knives, and hatchets.

Cutlers manufacture their own grindstones in the following way. A red sand, brought from the Assam and Cachar hills by Ganṛar boatmen, being mixed with lac (Chapṛá), is thoroughly heated over a fire, and, while still plastic, fashioned into the form of a wheel, and allowed to cool. Water is never used in sharpening iron instruments, a little fine sand being placed in the trough to lessen the heat, while the cutler holds the point of the knife with a piece of bamboo. A pedal is not required, as a servant drives the wheel backwards and forwards. Cutlers never work with a revolving wheel, and it is only when driven towards them that the edge of the instrument is applied. When the grindstone is worn out, it is sold to the village barbers, who manage with it to sharpen razors, and put an edge on spades, hoes, and "daos" for their fellow-villagers.

SHÁL-GAR.

Muhammadans who follow the profession of shawl cleaners, generally come from Hindustan, being invariably addressed as Paṭhán.

They wash Kashmírí, and other, shawls with soap or with the soap-nut (Ríṭhá)[1], darn holes, and then fumigate them with sulphur. Many Shálgars act as agents of the great Punjábí shawl merchants.

SHÍAHS.

The Shíahs, formerly large landholders in Eastern Bengal, have been steadily decreasing in numbers and influence during the last fifty years. At the present day they constitute a small proportion of the Muhammadan community, and in the city of Dacca do not possess above a hundred houses, although one fourth claim to be Sayyids. The majority are poor, a few only holding property which has been transmitted from father to son for three or four generations. When the English Government acquired possession of the Díwání of Bengal, many of the oldest and most respected families emigrated to Lucknow or Murshídábád, and those who remained had local ties which prevented them following the example of their neighbours.

By the Sunní the Shíah is styled Ráfizí (heretic), Tashaiyu', Irání, or Mughal; while he designates the Sunní Chár-yárí, Sunní Jam'at, or Tasannun.

In Dacca, the Shíahs having no Imám-dár, or priest, to lead the congregation at their devotions, the duty devolves on the most learned, or most honoured, among them. Although many of the old mosques in the city were built by Shíah nobles, the Sunnís will not permit any of that sect to enter them unless at hours when the service is not going on. A few years ago, quarrels arose between the rival sects, and, nowadays, the hatred of the Farazí is with such difficulty suppressed, that the Shíah rarely claims the right of worshipping in the public mosque, and very seldom resorts to it. Many Shíahs have turned Sunnís, marrying Sunní wives: but no Sunní will give his daughter to a Shíah.

Since the death of the last Nawáb of Dacca, in 1843, there has been no leader to keep the Shíahs united, or to prevent their absorption by the masses of Muhammadans around, while the disreputable life of the last Nawáb, and the absence of all restraint, have hastened the downfall of the old families. Many have become drunkards and libertines, and opium eating or smoking is very generally practised. Among them, however, a few gentlemen with literary tastes are to be found, and their knowledge of the world, more especially of Persia and other Muhammadan countries, is more intimate than generally obtains among Sunnís. At their homes Persian is still spoken, Hindustani being only used out of doors and to servants, while Bengali is an unknown language.

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[1] Sanskrit, Rishṭa, *Sapindus detergens.*

Although by long residence in Bengal the Shíah race has degenerated like the Armenian, the occasional importation of pure Persian blood has preserved a few families, among whom tall muscular men with characteristic Mughal physiognomy and pale olive complexion are to be found. The women are of a pale brown, or sallow complexion, often pretty, and with finely shaped figures. Both men and women are grossly superstitious, being more thoroughly imbued than the Sunní with Muhammadan legends and traditions.

The Shíah, again, is more reserved, exclusive, and dignified than the Sunní. The latter is beginning to attend school, and to advance with the onward movement of his contrymen, but the former rarely exhibits any energy or ambition to get on in life. Like the descendants of the early Portuguese, they dwell on the past, lamenting the decadence of their power, and differing in no material respect from their forefathers of a century ago. They cherish old customs and repudiate new ones, allowing the different races around to adopt modern ideas, and to progress towards a happier civilisation, while they alone remain unchanged.

The Shíahs are charitable to the poor, a few even paying "Zakát" at the rate of a fortieth of their income, and "Khams," or one-fifth of their profits, to the Sayyids. Although the Zakát is only distributed among Muhammadans, they inculcate and bestow charity on the destitute of all creeds.

The Muharram is the great Shíah fast, during which they do nothing but mourn and weep, eschewing fish for thirteen days, chewing no pân, and leaving the hands and feet unstained. The Husainí Dalán is still crowded with the "Marsiya," singers, and with spectators, but the number of Shíahs joining in the most solemn services do not exceed thirty. The number is decreasing yearly, and there is every prospect of the building being soon closed for want of worshippers.

The Shíah still preserves many superstitions regarding food. He will not touch the flesh of hares, peacocks, wading-birds, birds without gizzards, and fish without scales.

The 'Aqíqa, or thanksgiving festival on the birth of a child, though adopted by the Farazí, is peculiarly a Shíah custom, and consequently rejected by the Sunní. Like the Farazí the Shíah does not consider it meritorious to visit or make votive offerings at the tombs of Indian saints, a point in which they differ from the Persian Shíah.

The Dacca Shíahs still observe the Múṇḍná ceremony on the seventh day after birth, but they are too poor to comply with all the requirements, such as weighing the child's hair with gold coins, and distributing the amount in charity.

During the palmy days of Muhammadan rule, the Shíahs were the merchants, the Hindus the agents, brokers, and carriers of the inland commerce. At the present day the Shíah still trades, purchasing goods cheap in Calcutta and selling them at a profit in the villages of the interior. The ordinary name for a miscellaneous store, where mirrors, pictures, glass shades, and candelabra are sold, is "Mughaliya dukán," although the proprietor is not a Shíah.

It need hardly be added that the religion of the Shíahs is the same as that of the Persians, and has remained unaffected by the Farazí movement around.

SHIKÁRÍ.

Few Hindus in Eastern Bengal take any pleasure in sport, and only a few low caste men ever fire a gun. The Muhammadan, on the other hand, is often a keen sportsman, shooting deer and stalking paddy birds, rails, and other water birds. Rich families, again, often keep one or two Shikárís to supply their tables with all the common marsh birds and with an occasional deer or hare. The Mír-shikárí Bediyás and the Binds are, however, the only classes in Eastern Bengal who live by the game they kill.

In the cold season Muhammadans from Chittagong visit the Dacca district and capture the "Machh-rangá," or large blue kingfisher (*Todiramphus collaris*), in the following manner: On the bank of a pool or running stream, two nets hanging on rings are fixed at an acute angle, within which a tame kingfisher is placed as a decoy. The birds are most pugnacious, and as soon as a wild one sees the stranger it swoops down, but striking the upright net it becomes entangled, and all attempts to get free are unavailing. The concealed sportsmen make their appearance, and capturing the helpless bird, kill and skin it. The flesh is eaten, while the skin is pinned on a thick jungle leaf and dried. When sold to the Burmese, four anas are got for each skin.

The Mags, who occasionally visit the Eastern districts for the same purpose, by using nooses of string, and placing them in a circle around the decoy bird, are equally successful.

SHÍSHA-GAR.

The Shísha-gar is a glass blower, not a manufacturer of glass. He buys old broken tumblers and lamp shades, and in a very simple and expeditious manner fashions lamp-shades, phials, pipe stands and mouthpieces, and bottles (Qárúra) indispensable in the practice of Hakíms.

The articles manufactured are very brittle and full of air bubbles. With copper a green tint is given to glass; but the Shísha-gar is ignorant how to impart any other, and he cannot mould vessels.

The workman makes the various articles by fixing a mass of molten glass on the point of an iron tube, and by alternate blowing and rolling fashions it as he wishes. The size of the vessel is regulated by a pair of iron pincers held in the right hand, while the iron tube is being twirled in the left.

During the Durga-pújah the Shísha-gar is very busy, but at other seasons he depends on orders. Even the rude articles he makes are in great demand, and his small phials filled with perfumes, as well as lamp-shades, are to be seen in every respectable house. It is a matter of regret that men, so expert with clumsy tools, and so anxious to learn, should not be instructed in the modern art of glass blowing.

SIYÁHÍ-WÁLAH.

Ink manufacturers are always Muhammadans, there being in Dacca about twenty families of them.

There are three kinds of ink:—

1. Mushkí, made with charred rice soaked in water, to which lampblack is added.
2. Kitábí, made like the first, but gum acacia is an additional ingredient.
3. Qurání is a mixture of lampblack, gum, and vinegar, thoroughly boiled together.

Red ink (Shangarf), only made to order, is composed of red-lead disolved in garlic juice.

SÚZAN-GAR.

The artizans of this name manufacture with brass wire, pins, linked chains, finger-rings with bead setting, earrings, nose-rings, and tethers for tame parrots. Formerly they also made needles, but English ones are so vastly superior that no others are now used. They repair broken china and glass with gluten, sugar, and bands of wire.

The Súzan-gars have learned the art of plating in Calcutta, and gild in the following manner: A pot containing a solution of potash is warmed over a fire, and a brass ring tied to a piece of gold with a copper wire is immersed in it for five or six minutes, when it is removed, washed, and placed in the sun, and the gilding is complete.

The Súzan-gar often keeps a "Manihárí," or huckster's shop, where miscellaneous stores are sold.

TAMBÁKÚ-WÁLAH.

The use of tobacco spread with wonderful rapidity through-the East. In 1565, Sir John Hawkins first brought it to England; in 1601, the Portuguese introduced it into Java;[1] and the same year Asad Beg procured some at Bíjapúr, which he presented to Akbar. It was then supposed to have come from China, but the leaf was already in use at Mecca and Madínah.[2] According to the author of the Dárá Shikohi, the plant was first cultivated in India, by order of Akbar, in 1605. In 1617, the smoking of tobacco "having taken very bad effect upon the health and minds of many persons," Jahángír ordered that no one should practice the habit, but the Khán-i-'Álam was so addicted to it that he could not abstain.[3]

The use of tobacco extended, notwithstanding a prohibitory edict of Sháh 'Abbás (1582–1627), and in 1637, Mandelslo[4] found both rich and poor in Teheran smoking it, and drinking "Cahwa." The plant was grown near Bághdad, and in Kurdistán, but its preparation being defective, "Inglis tambáku" was preferred. The Persians smoked it through a cocoa nut, a dried pumpkin, or a glass vessel half filled with scented water.

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[1] Crawford's "Dictionary."
[2] Elliot's "History of India," vi, 165.
[3] *Op. cit.*, vi, 351.
[4] I, 576.

Chardin,[1] who lived in Persia from 1664 to 1670, mentions that the English first introduced "Tabac de Brezil" about 1630, but finding it too strong, the Persians took to cultivating the plant for themselves, the finest quality being grown at Hamadán and towards the Gulf. To increase its stimulating effects, Indian hemp was usually mixed with it.

It was probably owing to a spirit of opposition to what was then a Hindu and Muhammadan custom, that Guru Govind (1675–1708) forbad the use of snuff by his followers, and at the present day the Sikhs abstain from tobacco in all forms.

In India a name for tobacco is Súratí, from Súrat, where it was first imported; but physicians pronounce this sort to be possessed of very drying properties, and only fit for use when washed in rose-water, or "Bed-mushk."

According to the Hakíms, tobacco is hot and dry, being good for cold and lymphatic temperaments, but prejudicial to thin, spare habits, as it tends to consume, and still further emaciate the body. Its corrector (Muçlih) is milk, and when mixed with molasses the injurious effects of the weed are counteracted.

In Eastern Bengal, tobacco from Kochh Bihár is considered the finest; but that grown at Lucknow, Benares, or Patna is preferred by some, while tobacco grown locally is generally wanting in pungency; but a variety called "Wiláyati," evidently introduced by the English, and remarkable for its small leaves, is highly commended for its strength.

With very few exceptions all men smoke in Bengal, and boys scarcely able to walk may be seen inhaling the fragrant weed. Muhammadan women smoke and many chew, while, on the other hand, Hindu women only chew, and no high caste female will smoke.

Tobacco leaf is sold by Hindus of different castes, but Muhammadans alone will sell it ready made for smoking. Tobacco in towns is prepared for use by mixing the cut leaf with molasses, and then pounding them together in a mass, but in villages the leaf is merely cut up, mixed with molasses and kneaded with the hands. Nine-tenths of the native population smoke tobacco in one or other of these forms, but connoisseurs object to the pungency of the weed thus prepared, and prefer spiced tobacco (Maçálah ka tambákú), consisting of various ingredients, kept ready mixed, and sold by the tobacconists to customers of known tastes. Camphor, fœnu-greek, bay-leaves, and grated sandal wood are ordinarily used in Bengal; but by Hindustánís, conserve of roses, Jack-fruit juice, or that of the pineapple "Keorá" (*pan-*

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[1] III, 15. George Sandys, in his travels of 1610, is the first Englishman who describes tobacco-smoking among the Turks. In Russell's "Aleppo," i, 373, further particulars regarding the introduction of tobacco in the East are given.

danus) or "Kus-kus" are fancied. Among the higher classes of Muhammadans the white part of the Harsingár (*Nyctanthes*) flower is dried in the sun, and the expressed juice, mixed with tobacco, is said to impart the most delicious flavour to the weed.

Strong tobacco is, as a rule, chewed, the mild smoked. In Upper India tobacco leaf mixed with lime is generally chewed; but in Bengal, women, who are the most inveterate chewers, mix it with pân. The saliva is always expectorated, and there is no more repulsive sight in the Zanánas than that of walls, mats, and floors disfigured by the stains of the tobacco chewer.

When tobacco leaf is torn into small pieces, and the pipe-bowl filled, it is called "Sulfá," and again, when a plate of zinc or copper is put between the tobacco and the lighted charcoal, it is designated "Táwá."

Snuff (Nás), which is generally retailed by Muhammadans who keep miscellaneous stores, is rarely used except medicinally, being said to cure headaches by eliminating morbid humours from the brain. Two sorts of snuff are sold, the Benares and Masulipatam.

As a cure for a cold in the head, a very popular remedy is tobacco-leaf, which has been broken and dried before a fire. A pinch or two of this snuffed up, is said to cure the most obstinate cold.

TÁNTÍ.

The Muhammadan weaver belongs to a different "qaum," or division, to the Juláha, the former weaving fine Jámadání, or embroidered cloth, the latter only coarse muslins. These two classes eat and drink together, but never intermarry. The Tántí, moreover, resents being called Juláha, and is usually addressed as Kárígar, or Jámadání Tántí.

Mussulmán weavers are very numerous in Dacca, especially at Dhemra, Nabíganj, and other villages along the banks of the Lakhya, where they cultivate the soil whenever trade is dull. Their women never weave, working instead at "Chikan" embroidery, and looking down on the females of the Juláha class because they clean, card, and spin cotton.

Many Muhammadan weavers accept orders from the Hindu Tántí, who rarely manufactures Jámadání muslins. Hindu Mahájans, or Sardárs, as capitalists are called, or the Mussulmán "Sháot,"[1] advance money for certain sorts of work, which is allotted among different families, who agree to finish the piece within a fixed time. The great market for Jámadání cloth is Dhemra, on the Lakhya, and every Friday a fair is held there, at which large quantities of cloth are bought and sold.

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[1] Said to be a corruption of the Sanskrit Sádhú, a merchant.

The loom of the Tántí differs from that of the Juláha in having two "reeds" (Shánah), and two pedals (Jokhia), with which a web of from three to three and a half feet can be woven. The weaver, with whom a boy generally works, having no pattern to guide him, learns off by heart the number of threads he has to miss or pick up. Boys are taught the trade by having to join broken threads, and it is surprising at what an early age they become expert weavers.

It is a curious fact, and one very difficult to account for, that the modern Farazí doctrines have gained no footing among these weavers, the few who have been perverted invariably relinquish the occupation of Tántís, being excommunicated by the community. The only other Muhammadan classes among which Farazí preachers have failed to make any impression are the Hajjám and Dhobá, who observe in all its old perfection the Hinduized Muhammadanism of India. The weavers make pilgrimages to the tombs of saints, construct "Ta'ziyas" at the Muharram, invoke Zindah Ghází, the Panch Pír, and other Indian worthies, and participate in the license of the Holí.

Jámadání muslins are named from the pattern on them, and are usually worn by women, although fast men occasionally assume a Jámadání dhotí, or waist-cloth. The Sárí, or female wrapper, with an embroidered end, is known as "Achla," without one, but with four Koní, or Pankhí, "'Tethí."

Muslin is, as a rule, ornamented with flowers (Bútá), spots of various figures, stripes, cheques, or the pear-shaped designs so familiar on Kashmír shawls; and sometimes the piece is dyed of an ashen colour with charcoal and Káí, or starch.

TÁR-WÁLÁH.

This is the offensive trade of the Boyaudier, or gut-spinner, who prepares gut from the entrails of goats and sheep[1] for the strings of pellet bows (Ghulel), and musical instruments, such as the Behlá and Sárangí.

The fresh intestine being scraped and cut into lengths, according to size, is rolled in the palms of the hands, and dried. In former days, the entrails of all goats and sheep slaughtered in Dacca became the perquisite of the trade, but of late years they are bought as required.

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[1] Tánt in Dacca, is gut made from the intestines of cattle.

The Tár-wálahs intermarry with other Muhammadans, as their ancestor is said to have been the Khádim, or custodian, of a private mosque, the property of Nawáb Sháistah Khán, from which post he was arbitrarily driven out.

ṬIKIYÁ-WÁLÁH.

The makers of charcoal balls for tobacco-pipes are always Muhammadans, and there are about twenty-five houses occupied by them in Dacca. Boot sellers and Ṭikiyá manufacturers never sell their goods on Friday, the Muhammadan Sunday, a custom for which they can assign no reason.

Charcoal is prepared in huts erected on the borders of jungly tracts, thorny underwood producing the best. As the wood becomes charred, it is sprinkled with water and pounded in a "Dhenkí," after which the powder is sifted, and mixed with Congee water until a soft paste is formed. Women manipulate this into flattish cakes, which are arranged on mats and placed in the sun. Common "Guls," as they are called, sell for six or seven paisa a thousand; when bought wholesale by brokers they are sold at so much a mat, or so much for three mats, equal one "Gasht," or day's sale, and costing from five to six anas.

Guls again are either "Kachcha," soft, or "Pakka," hard; the former being made like the "Ṭikiyá," with the addition of rice paste (Leí), and the juice of the "Gáb" (*Embryopteris glutinifera*); the latter being prepared in a similar way, but, after adding the Gáb, the mass is again pounded, put into a vessel in which it is trodden with the feet, "Methí" (*Trigonella*), coriander, and syrup (Ráb), being mixed with it.

The "Kachchá" gul blackens cloth, and is rapidly consumed when once a-glow; the "Pakka" does not soil the fingers or cloth, it burns slowly, and when properly made will be found burning at the centre for some time after immersion in water. The Kachchá sell at from five to six anas a hundred, while the Pakka fetch sixteen to twenty-four anas.

ZAR-KOFT.

In accordance with the minute subdivision of labour in the East, the maker of gold and silver foil is distinct from the

Koft-gar, or inlayer of metals, the latter being regarded as the more respectable calling.

Silver or gold foil is prepared as follows: A rupee-weight of silver is drawn into a wire a yard long; it is then beaten flat, cut into lengths, and put between the folds of a skin,[1] and with an iron mallet, weighing about four pounds, the metal is hammered into as fine a leaf as possible. Gold-leaf thus prepared is sold to Kabírájs for medical purposes, and to the Koft-gar for his particular trade.

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[1] The skin, brought from Umritsur, is probably that of the hare, or musk-deer.

SECTION II.

RELIGIOUS SECTS OF THE HINDUS.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.
RITES AND CUSTOMS COPIED FROM ABORIGINAL RACES.
SECTS :—

Vaishnava.—Rámánuja—Rámávat—Nímávat—Vaishnavas of Bengal—Báyan-Kaupína—Kiṣorí-Bhajana—Jagat Mohaní—Spashṭa-Dáyaka—Kaví-Indra-Parivára—Báola—Darwesh-Faqír.
Ṣaiva.—Kánpháta-Jogí—Brahmáchárí.
Various.—Ṣrí-Náráyaṇa—Suthra Sháhí—Nának Sháhí—Trináth Pújah.

HINDU.

THE Hindus of Bengal deny that they have any Dravidian, or Kolarian, blood in their veins, and disown any connection with these two aboriginal races; yet Colonel Dalton[1] has arrived at the conclusion that aboriginal blood does form an important element in the constitution of the modern Bengali. It was most natural for the non-Aryan tribes to seek amalgamation with the civilised and enterprising foreigners, and this desire has always been encouraged by the Patita, or fallen, Bráhmans. The stages through which the mixed races passed before becoming Hindus can be ascertained by observing what is occurring at the present day. The Hill Garos, entering the plains, and intermarrying with Hindus, gave rise to the Hajong, a mongrel people, who, again, are kinsmen of the Doí, a caste having Bráhmans as Purohits. The same gradation is also observable in the case of the Ráj-vaṉsí Kochh, the Kochh Mandáí, and the Súrya-vaṉsí.

It is therefore reasonable to conclude that intermarriages between the early Hindus of the plains and the Dravidian Bhúiyas of the hills gave birth to similar mixed tribes, which, in the course of time, have been absorbed into the ranks of the Hindus, and are now reckoned pure Aryans. How far the aboriginal strain has impressed itself on the habits and customs of the people is a subject worthy of inquiry, as throwing a strong light on the real origin of the present inhabitants of Bengal. Many religious rites and usages have undoubtedly been adopted from the forest tribes, while others as certainly are survivals of particular tribal ceremonies, antecedent to the ordinances of the Ṣástras. Bráhmans, and high-caste Hindus, assert that there is no resemblance between their ceremonies and those of the aborigines, and if any similarity be detected it arises from the latter copying them. But not only is the appearance of the typical Bengali distinct from that of the typical Aryan, but the habits, religious rites, and gods of the two races differ materially. If any inference is to be drawn from these facts, it surely is that the Aryan settlers in Bengal, being either too few in numbers, or too weak, to eradicate aboriginal ideas, finally yielded, and adopted the superstitious rites of their neighbours. Other points are worthy of notice. These traces of aboriginal influence are chiefly found among the outcast tribes, presenting a remarkable diminution in the higher; and Bengali Bráhmans are still found practising ceremonials not enjoined by the Ṣástras, and clearly indigenous.

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[1] "Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal," pp. 305–309. Professor Max Müller, in the 17th Report of the British Association, London, 1848, says: "In Northern India the lower classes of the Hindus consist of aboriginal inhabitants, and some continue still outcasts in forests, and as servants in villages."

So many of the rites and usages of the people in Eastern Bengal are contrary to Hindu conceptions, and closely resemble the rites and usages of the Dravidian and Kolarian races, that we may reasonably conclude that they have been derived from the pre-Aryan tribes, more especially as the Ṣastras, and Puránas, are silent regarding them. It is, however, absurd to suppose that superstitious rites of aboriginal origin will be found as common among the high castes, as they undoubtedly are among the low, for within the memory of men still living many outcast tribes have discarded characteristic ceremonies, because they were at variance with Hindu orthodoxy, while many singular customs formerly observed by the Brahmanical order have fallen into disuse, and are now repudiated by it. Still there remains so much that is not Hindu, but aboriginal, that we can only ascertain its prevalence by examining those customs peculiar to Bengali Hindus, but unknown to the purer Aryan of Upper India.

1. Wearing the hair long and twisted into a knot, fixed behind, at one side, or on the top of the head, is characteristic of Dravidian tribes. When unwound the hair hangs in dark tresses over the neck, and to prevent inconvenience the wearer ties it with a silken or grass thread. Even among the semi-Hinduized races of Bengal, the Tíyar, Ṛishi, Beṛua, Chaṇḍál, and Gaṇṛár, this fashion still survives, and the young men adorn the top-knot with a "Champá," or other fragrant, flower. A reddish colour towards the point, very characteristic of all semi-Hinduized peoples wearing long hair, is usually attributed to neglect of oil, but no such change of colour is seen among Vairágis of high caste, who are the only Hindus who never shave the head.[1]

Dr. Caldwell affirms that wearing the hair long, and twisted into a knot, is peculiar to Dravidian races, being the badge of non-Aryan tribes, and that shaving the head, except the Sikhá, or Choṭí, is the distinguishing mark of an Aryan, or pseudo-Aryan, race. The Vishnu Puráṇa, again, states that the Páradas wore long hair, and Menu includes them among the Dásyus, who are undoubtedly non-Aryan, being distinguished by their long hair.

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[1] Jogis are often seen with red matted locks, but this is due to their smearing the hair with Alkaline earth.

By the higher classes of Hindus long hair is, even at the present day, considered the proper coiffure for the Nícha, and when any of them appear with shaven pate, and cue, they have to bear much chaff at their pretensions. Most of the lower castes, however, are vain of their dark tresses, and spend much time in arranging them. It is amusing to watch a young Chaṇḍál boatman with his mirror, comb, and pot of mustard oil, intent on dressing his hair in what he regards the most taking style, and when he steps ashore there is no diffidence apparent in his walk, and no misgiving as he struts among the shaveling Hindus. It will be long before fashion changes with him, or induces him to give up so much personal gratification.

Whenever any of the long-haired castes appear before Hindus, as the Ṛishi is often required to do, they either hide the locks beneath the folds of a turban, or wind them so as to be invisible. For this reason, few notice the prevalence of the custom in Bengal—a custom, moreover, chiefly found among castes rarely brought into contact with Europeans.

It is a remarkable fact that Nicolo de Conti, describing the dwellers of the Delta, early in the fifteenth century, says: "The Indians along the Ganges have no beards, but very long hair, which some tie at the back of their head with a cord, and let it flow over their shoulders." No traveller at the present day would represent the inhabitants of Bengal as a long-haired people, but De Conti wrote before the advent of Chaitanya, and before Vaishnavism obliged its followers to shave the head. It is probable, however, that the Venetian traveller is speaking of the fisher and agricultural races, who even now wear the hair in the style he describes.

Wavy or frizzled hair, as distinguished from woolly, is occasionally seen among the lower castes. One member of a family may have it, while the others have the usual long silken locks, and when it occurs the beard and moustache are large and bushy. Three of a Beṛua family from the banks of the Padma exhibited this peculiarity of hair in a remarkable manner. The eldest, aged 30, paternal uncle of the other two, had the hair frizzled, but fine and glossy, and whiskers large; the second, aged 26, had coarse curly hair; and the third, aged 19, had luxuriant red-tipped locks hanging in clusters over the shoulders.

Long hair is deemed by all Hindus an attraction, and one of the numerous epithets of Kṛishna is Keṣava, the long-haired. Loose unkempt hair (Jaṭa), rolled in a knot above the head, is characteristic of Jogis, and Ṣaiva mendicants, and an epithet of Ṣiv is Jaṭa-dhara, wearing matted hair.

2. Individuals with blue eyes and red hair are less common than in Hindustan; but among the Ṣánkhárís of Dacca a few families are remarkable for this singularity. Their skin is either colourless,[1] or brown in patches, the hair coarse and red; but there is no defect of vision. This hereditary peculiarity has descended through several generations, and is not considered a bar, or even an objection, to marriage.

Natives with blue (kanjá), grey, or cat's eyes (viḍála chakra), although common in Bengal are perhaps less so than among Rájputs, Kurmís, and the Kolítas of Asam.[2] This anomaly, generally accounted a blemish, is either inherited, or, like a mother mark, congenital. The blue iris is always crossed by white, or grey, radii, while the pupil is surrounded by a pale yellowish areola. The hair of the head is black, but soon turns grey; that of the body and eyebrows is pale brown. Examples of this defect were noticed among individuals of the Ghaṭak, Gop, and Chanḍál castes.

3. When Europeans first visited Bengal they were struck with the pale colour of the people. The Cingalese, and residents of Southern India, who were best known, being of dark hue, the travellers were not prepared to find races paler than those left behind.[3] Manrique, who resided at Dacca about 1640, and traversed Eastern Bengal, speaks of the people as being either of a yellowish-brown colour (color bázo), or black like the Cingalese. At the present day all shades of yellowish-brown are met with, and colour is no longer a test of purity of race. As a people the inhabitants of Bengal are darker than Hindustání tribes; but even among Bráhmans the colour of the skin is often as swarthy as among Dravidians. The Chamár is proverbially dark, but many Ṣrotriyá Bráhmans are darker. Exposure to the sun, wind, and rain tends to blacken the skin. Members of a caste residing in the country are darker than their town brethren, and those engaged in agricultural pursuits than sedentary traders. Comparing the different strata of the population in Bengal, it will be found, as a general rule, that the higher the caste the fairer the complexion, and the lower in social grade the darker. But to this rule there are many exceptions, and it cannot be predicated from the hue of the skin what is the social position of the individual. The natives regard dark men as belonging to low, and fair ones to high castes; but experience

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[1] Leucoderma, or Leucopathia.

[2] Dalton's "Descriptive Ethnology," pp. 79, 320.

[3] Linschoten writes, "Incolae colore similes sunt insulanis in Seylon, nisi quod plusculum albicent quam Cingalas."

proves that this test is most fallacious. The Aryan blood has, as in other parts of India, prevailed over the aboriginal, and in physiognomy, build, and complexion, the native of Bengal generally shows more resemblance to the former than to the latter. The figure of the average Bengali is that of a short, slim, well made, but physically weak man, with ample forehead and an intellectual cast of countenance, differing in every respect from the typical flat-featured, broad-nosed, squat and dumpy figure of the Dravidian. It is, however, rash to argue from physique, or colour, for among the present inhabitants of Bengal, and even in the ranks of the most distinguished, individuals are found who resemble in every respect the race with whom they have the least manifest connection.

4. Tattooing is a style of personal decoration fashionable among all classes of women. Bráhman, Chaṇḍál, and even Muhammadan, females think their charms are enhanced by permanently staining the face. In some parts of Bengal it is forbidden to a Bráhman, or a clean caste man, to drink water from the hands of any woman without a spot or stain. This prejudice, although formerly deeply rooted, is now dying out fast. There is no doubt, however, that staining the skin was originally an aboriginal, not an Aryan custom, and neither in Sanskrit nor Bengali are there words for tattooing.[1] The terms Godná and Pachhná, common to most of the Indian languages, are Hindi. Moreover, the most expert tattooers in Hindustan are the Natní, in Bengal the Bediyání and Chaṇḍální; and the Chamáín women have recourse to it more than the females of any other class.

Tattooing is practised by most Kolarian and Dravidian tribes. The Anka Miris are so called by the Asamese, on account of their stained faces. No Naga can be tattooed until he has brought home a head, and marriage is then permitted, if he makes himself as hideous as possible by tattooing. The Kyeng girls of Arakan are tattooed at an early age, and so disfigured that they are saved from being kidnapped by neighbouring tribes. Other races have adopted distinguishing stain marks. The Bírhor women stain their chests, arms, and ankles, but never the face; the Oráon the brow and temples only; the Ho paint on the skin an arrow, the national emblem;[2] but any Kisan female getting tattooed is summarily expelled from the tribe.

Among semi-Hinduized races this decoration is greatly admired. The Ágareah tattoo the hands and feet, not the face;

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[1] Painting the face with sandal, saffron, and other fragrant substances was practised, and Pattra is the usual Sanskrit term for this decoration.

[2] Dalton's "Descriptive Ethnology," pp. 132, 191.

and the Chamár stain all the exposed parts of the body. Hindus in Eastern Bengal are usually satisfied with a stellate spot (ullikhi) stained on the forehead above the base of the nose, but often fancy having the helix of the ear tattooed, and ornamented with filigree studs. Buchanan informs us that tattooing was more fashionable in Bihár than Bhágalpur, and that the strict Hindus of Gorakhpúr were not prevented drinking from the hands of a maiden of unstained face.

5. Several customs connected with marriage, and the rights of property, though prohibited by Hindu legislation, are still practised by the semi-Hinduized tribes, but considerably modified in the course of ages. The most important of these tribal usages is widow marriage. Menu[1] denounces the practice as fit only for cattle, but admits it was allowed in the days of the impious Veṇa. In one passage,[2] however, the legality of a childless widow marrying a kinsman is conceded. At the present day neither Bráhmans nor clean Ṣudras practise it, but in 1756 the famous Rájah Ráj Bullabh, a Vaidyá of Dacca, wishing to get his widowed daughter re-married, consulted the Pandits, who decided that women are at liberty to re-marry, if their husbands be not heard of, if they die, become ascetics, impotent, or degraded.[3] This decision, more favourable than could have been expected, was never, it is said, acted upon. In Buchanan's time three-fourths of the Hindus of Dinájpúr recognised widow marriages as lawful, but did not reckon it so honourable as Viváha or proper matrimony. Whenever observed the contract is voluntary, the usual ceremonies are curtailed, turmeric is not used, and divorce is prohibited except for adultery. Sagái[4] is the usual term in Bengal, Nikáh in Upper India.

In Eastern Bengal at the present day widow marriage, though less common than formerly, is still solemnized by the Chaṇḍáls, Mahisha Goálas, Gaḍariyá, Kochh Mandái, Kándho, Kewaṭ, Jaiswára Kurmís, Muriárí, Ṛishi, and Súraj-vaṉṣi. In Kámrup[5] the Vaidika Bráhman, and Ráj-vaṉṣi, widows re-marry; the children of the latter however, cannot marry in their father's class, but must be satisfied to wed with inferior clean tribes. Among the Mahrattas, Páṭ, as it is called, is common with all Ṣúdra castes, and the ceremony is always performed at the Kṛishná-paksha, or dark half of the month. Banjára[6] widows re-marry, the ceremony consisting in the gift of a new cloth, and the selection of a fortunate hour in which to conduct the bride to her new home. Among the Mallialies of Madras,[1] a widow must marry any man proposing to her, and the ceremony generally takes place fifteen days after the husband's death.

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[1] Menu, ix, 64–66

[2] *Ibid.*, ix, 190.

[3] "Calcutta Review," xxv, 358.

[4] Sa-gotra—of the same family.

[5] Buchanan, iii, 519.

[6] "J. A. S. of Bengal," xiii, 4.

Any Muhammadan widow in Bengal can re-marry four months and ten days after the death of her husband, but she can only become a Nikáh wife.[2] These instances are enough to prove that widow marriage, though denounced by the Bráhmans, is still practised throughout India. The two castes which observe it most frequently are the Kurmí and Koeri; but of late years the Ayodhyá Kurmís, apeing the usages of their superiors, have relinquished it altogether. Widow marriage is not universal among Kolarian and Dravidian tribes, but Colonel Dalton mentions it as existing among the Mikirs, Márs, and Pání-Kochh, and it is probable that when rich no widow belonging to these or kindred tribes ever pines for a second husband.

In former days, when a Hindu died before consummation, his widow was marriageable to his brother, he and she both consenting; but a certain blemish attached to her from having been previously affianced to another. This union was quite distinct from the proper Levirate marriage, which recognises a brother, or near kinsman, as the person to raise up seed (kshetriya) to a deceased and childless brother. Even Menu says,[3] if a widow, her lord being dead, have no sons, she is to be dependent on the near kinsman of her husband; and again,[4] the son by a kinsman inherits the collected estate of the deceased. On the other hand, such a commission to a brother, or other near kinsman, is denounced by the same legislator,[5] as being nowhere mentioned in the nuptial texts of the Vedas.

6. Among many Hindu tribes, the Levirate marriage custom is still observed. The Jáṭ men assert the right of marrying their deceased brother's wife; but the women vehemently dispute the claim.[6] With the Koerí[7] the usage is still common. Within the last few years the Ṛishí, Chaṇḍál, Paṭní, and Gaṇrár have relinquished this usage, which is repugnant to the feelings of all Bengali Hindus. The Hindustáni Tántí, Chamár, Dosád, and Gaḍariyá still practise it, and are not ashamed to

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[1] Shortt, part ii, 43.
[2] "Koran" (Sale), chap. ii, p. 28.
[3] Menu, v, 148.
[4] *Ibid.*, ix, 190.
[5] *Ibid.*, ix, 65.
[6] "J. A. S. of Bengal," xxxv, 135.
[7] "Descriptive Ethnology," p. 321.

confess that they do so. Dalton states[1] that the polygamous Málers observe the Levirate marriage, and when a man dies his numerous widows are distributed among the brothers and cousins, but only one to each. The Márs of Sirguja, too, always take to wife their sisters-in-law. Dr. Shortt mentions that in Vizagapatam Bráhmans, Chhatrís, and Ṣúdras do not allow their widows to marry, but they are taken in concubinage by the younger brothers. In Bengal the union is never obligatory, and, if either objects, the widow returns to her father's house, and may re-marry with the man of her own choice. No compensation is paid to the widow's family should the objection have come from the brother-in-law. It is only in the case of a deceased elder brother's wife that this Jewish custom is observed.

A very remarkable instance of the Levirate marriage is preserved in the Puránas, and goes to prove that the usage was not so abhorrent then as it is now. In the Vishnu Purána Vyása, by command of his mother Satyavatí, marries the two widows of his eldest half-brother Vichitravírya, and begets, besides others, the famous Páṇḍu. In this legend there are two peculiarities—the command of the mother to the son, and the relationship of the heir, who is half-brother of the deceased.

By Hindu law seven kinds of second marriage are recognised, which are, however, in practice restricted to the Ṣúdra castes. The Levirate marriage is designated Punar-bhú, being born again; while Para-púrvá is any woman who has had a previous husband.

The Levirate marriage is really a right of succession, or a counterpart of that right, and is closely connected with the descent through females, a more archaic system of kinship than that through males. According to McLennan,[2] both procedures can only be explained by the practice of polyandry. In the ruder form, namely, that in which the husbands are not brothers, the descent in the female line is always observed.

7. Polyandry is still a recognised institution among the Butias,[3] the Kametis, and Botis of Ladák,[4] and the Kasias[5] of Eastern Bengal, and with these tribes female descent is the rule. Kasia children inherit through the mother, and are buried beside her, while the father lies among his kindred. Polyandry is extinct among the Garo and Kochh, but Garo sons do not inherit, and the widowed mother remains head of the house. The Kochh husband, again, transferring all his pro-

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[1] Op. cit., p. 273.

[2] "Primitive Marriage," p. 200.

[3] Dalton, p. 98.

[4] Cunningham's "Ladak," p. 295.

[5] "J. A. S. of Bengal," ix, 834; xiii, 625.

perty to his wife, goes and lives with her mother, and when she dies, her daughters are the heirs.

Vestiges of these primitive customs are still found among the Hindus of the plains, although polyandry has been obsolete for centuries. That these vestiges are survivals of systems older than the Aryans is most probable, for they exist among the Todas, the most ancient inhabitants of the peninsula, but no Hindu will admit they were ever practised by his ancestors. Nevertheless, these usages are met with at the present day among the aboriginal tribes of Central India, and the lowest agricultural races of Bihár, who, Colonel Dalton considers,[1] are descended from Kols. It is a remarkable fact that Mithila and Sarvária Bráhmans still recognise the bhánjá, or sister's son, as the family priest; and the Mungírya Tántís style him Bráhman, investing him with the presidency at all domestic and party gatherings.

8. Demonolatry, or Shamanism,[2] is a system of religious worship peculiar to Dravidian and other non-Aryan races; but it is still practised in Bengal by Chaṇḍáls, and more frequently by Chamárs and other low Hindustání castes. By Shamanism is understood an ecstatic state into which the devotee throws himself by abstraction, drugs, and the excitement of the giddy dance, quickened by the din of musical instruments. As Sir J. Lubbock points out, Shamanism is no definite system of theology, but a stage of belief in advance of that in which animals and trees are worshipped. It expresses a yearning after a closer communion with a higher intelligence, and when in ecstasy the worshipper is believed to have soared above the world, and become united with a loftier and holier nature. While in this condition he is able, or supposed to be able, to foretell futurity, and, inspired by a demon, to answer questions beyond the ken of other men. In Hindustán the common term for this divine fury is "Deo chaṛhána," to make the god mount up; in Bengal "Biál paran." The beings worshipped are not of this world, but connected in some mysterious way with the deity. They are usually regarded as devils, wicked, vindictive, and fitful, whose enmity is averted by timely sacrifices. It is unusual to pay adoration to any particular demon, but the Chamárs call upon Deví, with all the superstitious formalities of Shamanism.

Tribes practising this form of worship have no regular priesthood, although in Southern India the Shaman is a recognised profession; consequently any one, who feels himself fitted, can assume the character, and whenever trouble or calamity threatens it is easy to hire a competent actor.

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[1] "Descriptive Ethnology," p. 63.

[2] Shaman, in Persian, signifies an idolater, being derived from the Sanskrit Śramaṇa, a Buddhist mendicant.

The priests of the Kolarian Santál are the most expert Shamans, and after prolonged fasting, prayer, and mental abstraction, throw themselves into a frenzy by the beating of drums.[1] In Eastern Bengal the Shaman is popularly called the "Matwálah," or the intoxicated, as it is customary for him to prepare for the performance by fasting a whole day, drinking Bháng, or smoking Gánjhá, and quaffing the freshly drawn blood of a goat, sheep, or buffalo. In Dacca the Charak Pújah and the Dashara are the favourite seasons for demonolatry, but whenever the future is to be interrogated a Shaman is hired.

It is a curious instance of the corruption prevailing among Bengali Muhammadans that individuals are found performing at the "Sháikh Sadú-ka-Karáhí," exactly similar antics to those of the Hindu Matwálah.

9. Partiality for pork is an infirmity shared by Kolarian, Dravidian, and low castes in Bengal. The Oráons prefer pork to everything, and their villages swarm with pigs.[2] Even in Menu's days the pig was a domestic animal in India, and a Bráhman was degraded immediately by touching its flesh.[3]

Breeding pigs is an occupation only followed by the very lowest tribes in Bengal; but fondness for its flesh remains long after Hindu influences have taught them to discard other aboriginal customs. The Paṭní, outcast Bhúinmálí, Dôm, Chamár, and Ṛishi, not only breed pigs, but eat them. The Bind, Chaṇḍál, Dosád, Kahár of Hindustání connections, Kándho, and Kochh Mandái, are still fond of pork; but the Súraj-Vaṉṣi, Bengali Kahárs, Karrál, and Baqqál, having assumed the airs of clean Ṣúdras, renounce any taste for the unclean animal.

The pig being the usual victim sacrificed to Grám-devatas, the eating of its flesh was originally a Kolarian or Dravidian custom, which has been preserved by the semi-Hinduized tribes now found in Bengal.

10. The drinking of rice spirit, Surá, was countenanced by the Vedic Hindus, and the Rámáyana describes several Bacchanalian scenes in which Ráma, and even the gentle Ṣítá, joined. Kṛishna denounced intoxication among his Yádava brethren, but the credit of having first enacted a law against it is due to Ṣukráchárya, preceptor of the Daityas. Menu[4] prohibits

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[1] On demonolatry, devil-dancing, and demonical possession, see "Contemporary Review" for February, 1876. In Southern India the "Peyadi" eschews Bháng and other drugs, and is often a woman. In "Lettres Edifiantes," xi, 45, a Jesuit father confesses his belief in the possession.

[2] Dalton, p. 251.

[3] Menu, v, 19.

[4] *Ibid.*, xi, 91, 96.

Bráhmans from tasting Surá, which is made from the Mala, or filthy refuse, of the grain, or drinking any other inebriating liquor, and mentions eight different kinds of spirits, including Ásava, the most pernicious of all.

Intemperance is not general among Bengali Hindus at the present day, but the consumption of spirituous liquors among certain classes is excessive. In Eastern Bengal many of the three highest castes follow the Tantric ritual, and observe the secret Kaula orgies, which require the drinking of large quantities of coarse spirit. A whole bottle of bázár brandy is often quaffed at a draught on such occasions, and it is reasonable to infer that individuals who can stand such a quantity must prepare themselves by solitary drinking. Intoxication, however, is denounced by the strictest Kaula worshipper, and the effects of their orgies are rarely discovered.[1] It is among the low and semi-Hunduized, tribes that drinking to the extent of insensibility is practised, and to ensure this desirable result, they add Dhatúrá or Bháng, to the spirit. In Bengal all the low castes drink spirits, and at festivals in honour of Grám-devatas intoxication is the usual termination. Low Hindustání castes are more confirmed drunkards than their Bengali fellows, and are not ashamed at being detected in liquor. No Hindu of intemperate habits is excluded from caste privileges as long as he does not cause a scandal; otherwise the Pancháít is obliged to pass sentence on his conduct. With all low Hindu castes the liquor of the Tál palm,[2] or Tṛiṇa-rájah, the king of grasses, is the favourite stimulant; but when intoxication is desired, bázár, or raw rice, spirit, is preferred.

11. Fetichism. The believer in this superstition fancies that the possession of a fetich of any spirit enables him to make a servant of that spirit; but it must be recollected, as Sir J. Lubbock points out, that an object regarded as a fetich by one person may be an idol to another.

In Bengal Fetichism has become modified, often disguised by contact with the higher Hindu religion, and few will admit that the thing worshipped resembles in any respect the fetich of the African negro. Yet in what other light are we to regard the reversed Ṣankh shell, bought for its weight in gold, and confided in to secure wealth and happiness; or the scarlet seeds of the "Rakta-chandana," employed by the Kíchaka to ensure success, and much plunder; or the hollow siliceous concretions, said to be petrified grains of rice offered to Vishnu, and extolled by Bráhmans as the safeguard of their holy shrines; or the "Vana-linga" of the Nerbudda? Still more in point is the Sálagráma,[1] or Ammonite, which has been deified, and is worshipped as the special deity of the Brahmanical order, fetching enormous prices according to the fictitious power and virtue ascribed to its varying shapes.

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[1] Further details of the drinking habits of Hindus are to be found in the "J. A. S. of Bengal," xlii, 2.

[2] Sir W. Jones says: "The juice of the Tál is the most seducing and pernicious of vegetable liquors: when just drawn, it is as pleasant as Pouhon water (at Spa), fresh from the spring, and almost equal to the best mild champagne ("Asiatic Res.," iv, 311).

Whatever may be the ideas of the higher ranks, respecting marine curiosities, rare fossils, or strange seeds, there can be no doubt that the care and veneration bestowed on them by the owners tend to support the belief of the lower classes, that they are emblems of the deity embodied in them, and who acts through, or by, them. That any intelligent Bráhman would allow that the Sálagráma is more than an idol is not to be expected, but the Kíchaka admits that he addresses his petitions to the seeds as he would to any sentient being. In fact, the Kíchaka remains in the lower stage of Fetichism, while the Bráhman has risen to a higher belief—that of idolatry and anthropomorphism.

12. In every Hindu village of Eastern Bengal there is a ṭola, or quarter, consecrated, either to Kálí, Chandí,[2] Shashṭhí, or Siddheṣvarí, to which the villagers repair, either collectively or singly, to present offerings, and propitiate the deity supposed to inflict disease or calamity. Any large stone, or slab, beneath a Pipal, Bat, or Seorhá tree, smeared with red-lead, and moistened with Ghí, or milk, is conceived to represent the guardian deity. The villagers never analyse the motives of this strange worship, but few believe that the god is embodied in the stone. The block is merely regarded by the multitude as the medium through which the god acts, or communicates his will, and for this reason it is always approached, and spoken of, with reverence.

This conception of a guardian deity has been adopted by the Bráhmans. The city of Dacca has an idol, carefully preserved in a holy shrine, called the Dhákeṣvarí, which, like the Trojan Palladium, is revered as a pledge of the safety of the city and its inhabitants. At Patna, again, the tutelary deity is Pataneṣvarí, and in both instances the attendant Bráhmans identify the god with Durgá, or Kálí.

The most popular deity of all low Bengali castes is Deví, Jalka Deví, Bandí, Bana-Durgá, Champa-batí, Mahámáyá, or Parameṣvarí, undoubtedly a goddess of the aboriginal races.

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[1] Regarding the varieties of this fossil and the fables grounded on its singular structure, see Ward's "Hindus," iii, 222, and "Lettres Edifiantes" (Edition 1781), xiv, 107–115.

[2] "The Artemis, or immortal huntress of the Oráons" (Dalton, p. 258).

She is invoked with bloody sacrifices and libations of blood, and spirits, under shady trees, or at night in the silence and solitude of the forest. A Bráhman never officiates, but one of the company stabs the victim, usually a pig, with a knife, or bamboo spit, and catching the blood in a cup offers it to the dreaded goddess. No doubts are ever entertained regarding the acceptance of the sacrifice, or fears expressed that Deví is dissatisfied with receiving only the spiritual part of the animal, for the victim is at once cut up, roasted, and eaten by the assembled worshippers, while the skin, hoofs, and offal are buried. It is strictly forbidden to leave any of the flesh uneaten, or to carry home a morsel of it. The feast always ends in a liberal consumption of fiery spirits.

Deví is usually invoked in the month of Srávan (July and August), and by many her worship is called the Srávania Pújáh. It is obvious that this rite, bearing no resemblance to any Bráhmanical ceremony, is a survival of an aboriginal cultus pertaining to those unclean castes which are most unlike the Hindus. By the Ráwats, for instance, Deví is the goddess of the tribe, and to her sacrifices are offered whenever sickness or sorrow overtakes their families.

13. A large and ubiquitous class of beings, included under the generic name of Bhúta, or Bhúta-devatás, identical with the ghosts, banshees, bogeys, and goblins of Western credulity, are worshipped by the superstitious classes of Bengal. They are most numerous in jungly tracts where lofty trees afford shade and silence, or in the sombre valleys of hilly districts. Around Dacca, and in Bikrampúr, where old "Pipal" and "Bat" trees of dense foliage abound, Bhúts are very numerous and very powerful. Others dwell in cities, in ruined temples, in graveyards, in burning gháts, and even in dry wells. They are met with on the arid treeless plain, the flooded river, and the lonely forest glade. The timid recognise their cry in the hooting of the owl, the howling of the jackal, the yelp of the village cur, and the whistle of the plover. One kind of demon, sedentary in its habits, attaches itself to a village, another to a household; some inflict plagues, others blight the opening bud, or convulse the new-born babe. The Bengali sees in every accident the work of evil spirits, and his longing desire is to obtain some means of counteracting their influence. The women are naturally the chief adherents of this superstition, and while engaged in the most commonplace work are ever watchful against the entrance of a devil.

The length that these simple people go in their belief of Bhúts is almost incredible. The mildewed ear of rice, the appearance of wild rice, or of weeds, in the paddy fields, the murrain among the cattle, the hail smiting the green crops, the weevil spoiling the mangoes, the shrivelled yellow leaves of the pân garden, are one and all the work of malevolent spirits. Many persons turn this credulity to profit. Mantras, or magical formulæ, are bought from the Ganak Bráhman; copper amulets, containing sentences of the Koran, from the Khwándkár; and charms of various kinds, such as a vertebra, tooth, or scale of a fish, a segment of a bone, a seed, or a bit of wood from the Vairágí. Fields and gardens are protected from the evil eye by a black pot painted with a white cross, having the limbs bent at right angles, and raised on a mound.[1] If hail should threaten to beat down his spring crop the Silarí is summoned to avert the danger.

The peasant, however, is not the only class enslaved by this marvellous belief, for even educated gentlemen, acting under female dictation, call in the aid of magicians to cast out the devil haunting his house, or tormenting his child. Infants and pregnant women are especially subject to the malign influence of a Bhúta; but all convulsive diseases, the delirium of fever, and raving madness, are referred to possession by an evil spirit. In such cases, the Kabíráj, confessing his want of power, makes way for the exorcist, or Ojhá, and magic is substituted for medicine. The Bráhmans, profiting by this grievous superstition, have set apart one day in the year for the worship of the whole host of devils, and have craftily selected a moonless night near the autumnal equinox. The Bhúta-chaturdaṣí, as this festival is called, falls on the fourteenth of the dark half of Áṣwin (September and October).

14. By far the more important Grám-devata in Eastern Bengal is Bura-Burí, literally old man and old woman. In some places this deity is identified with Bura-Ṭhákuráin, Bana-Durga, or Siddheṣvari, or Vriddheṣvari, other personifications of that goddess; but according to the Bráhmans Bura-Burí is Mahádeva and Durga.

The annual festival of this rustic divinity is the Paush Sankrant, or last day of that month, corresponding to December and January; but on any occasion of sickness, or trouble, its favour may be invoked. There are several shrines in the Dacca district[2] sacred to Bura-Burí, but whenever Bat and Pipal trees are entwined, or married, as the Hindus say, there is the favourite haunt of the god. The worship ought properly to be held beneath a "Seorhá" tree (*Trophis aspera*[1]), but if not available a branch of it will answer.

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[1] This is the Svastika or mystical cross, of the Buddhists.

[2] "The most ancient and holy spot in Upper Assam is a shrine of Bura-Buri. The most esteemed offering is a white buffalo. ("J. A. S. of Bengal," xvii, 467.)

At Golá-Kandha, near Sunnárgáon, a very celebrated fair in honour of Bura-Buri is annually held in Paush, at which crowds of Chaṇḍáls, as well as representatives of all Ṣúdra castes, assemble. At Cháchar-tolá, on the banks of the Padma, is a very old shrine, dedicated to this deity, and tended by Ṣrotriyá Bráhmans from Chakra-Ṣála in Chittagong. The sanctuary is a ruined brick building, in which is placed the idol represented by a ghat, or waterpot, on which stands a cocoanut daubed with red-lead. The eyes are of brass, while the protruding tongue is a partially detached portion of the shell. The dense grove around consists of Pipal, Tamarind, and Vakula trees, while over the ruined building hang the branches of Pipal and Bat trees, whose roots, penetrating through the masonry, are steadily disintegrating the walls. Each morning the idol is ornamented with garlands of flowers, while leaves of the Bel tree are heaped on its top, and those falling to the ground are presented to the credulous worshipper, in token of the god's satisfaction. Male goats and buffaloes are the ordinary victims. The Bráhman, or his assistant, decapitates the animal with one sweeping cut of a "dáo," and pours out the blood in front of the sanctuary. The trees of the grove are then sprinkled with the blood, and red-lead daubed on the roots and branches. This horrid practice not only disfigures the trees, but the odour round about is that of the shambles.

All castes from the Bráhman downwards present votive offerings to Bura-Buri, and even Muhammadans occasionally resort thither. Vaishnavas, who cannot take life, bring a kid, which is afterwards set free, as the Bráhman is forbidden to sell it. By Chaṇḍáls, and other low castes, ducks' eggs are offered, and a pig being killed, its blood is caught up, and poured out as a libation before the idol. In Bhowál they afterwards eat the flesh; but in other parts of Bengal, having given up this unholy custom, they allow any one to remove the carcass. When Bráhmans, or Káyaths, sacrifice an animal to Bura-Buri, where there is no established shrine, a servant usually gives the *coup-de-grâce.*

At Shujá'atpúr, on the outskirts of Dacca, a "Pipal" and "Bat" tree intertwined has for generations been a favourite spot at which to make offerings to Bura-Buri, especially after the recovery of children from illness, when the parent dedicates the child's cue, or top-knot, and offers milk, sweetmeats, plantains, and sometimes a cock, to the divinity. Muhammadans

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[1] Sanskrit, Ṣákhoṭa. It is also known as Piṣácha-dru, Piṣácha-vṛiksha, or Bhúta-vṛiksha, the tree of the goblins.

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on similar occasions make pilgrimages to the spot, and present offerings.

There can be no doubt that this androgynous deity, worshipped throughout the valley of Assam, and along the banks of the Brahmaputra, has been derived from the aboriginal tribes, and identified by the Bráhmans with Hindu gods. But, not content with this recognition, they even deign to officiate at its shrines.

15. Another tutelary village god is Pancha-nanda, to whom a "Sthán," or shrine, served by Ṣrotriyá Bráhmans, is consecrated at Dacca. It is situated in a quarter of the city called Káyath-ṭolí, and consists of a brick platform with a square pillar at one end from which an iron rod projects, having an oval mass of concrete, stained red, fixed at its point. When a child is six years old, a lock of its hair is offered to the deity, along with rice, sweetmeats, and plantains. The Bráhman being fed, mumbles a short prayer, and the ceremony ends. The object of this worship is the preservation of children from sickness. As thus described, the homage paid to Páncha-nanda differs materially from that observed in former days[1] in Central Bengal, when the blood of sacrifices was required to propitiate the god.

16. Araṇya, or Jamáí, Shashṭhí is the most popular goddess of Bengali women, for her favour is supposed to ensure the health of children, and prevent barrenness. By the Bráhmans she is regarded as an Anṣa, or portion, of Durga, or Kálí. Her festival is held on the sixth of the waxing moon of Jait (May and June). On this day a hole is dug, and a branch of the Bat tree, with its twigs sprinkled with red-lead, curds, and pounded turmeric, is inserted. Around the hole bamboo leaves, tufts of Dúb grass, and flowers, are thickly strewn. A Bráhman then performs the service with oblations of fruits and confections, and expatiates on the benefits to be derived from the adoration of Shashṭhí. Before leaving the spot every woman present sprinkles curds and tumeric on the hallowed branch. At this festival a great fruit fair is held, when large quantities of Makhánna (*Anneslea Spinosa*), mangoes, jack-fruit, cucumbers, berries of the Paniyálá, and drupes of the Palmyra palm, are sold, and many Hindus make it a rule not to eat a mangoe until the Bráhman has been given one on the morning of this day.

Shashṭhí is properly worshipped under a Bat tree, and most villages have one consecrated to her, but the populace do not believe that she is born, lives, and dies, with the tree, like the Dryad of Greek mythology. Each villager as he passes makes obeisance, and refuses to pluck the smallest leaf or twig, for fear of offending the divinity.

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[1] Ward's "Hindus," iii, 183.

The most important ceremony, however, in honour of Shashṭhi is the Chhaṭhí, observed on the sixth day after birth, when Vidhátá,[1] or Brahmá, enters the house, and writes its destiny on the child's forehead. On this occasion two lumps of cowdung are placed at each side of the nursery door, and for fifteen days red-lead is coated over them, and Dúb grass, well moistened, laid on the top.

17. Siddheșvarí and Vriddheșvarí, regarded by Bráhmans as Anșas of Durga, are popular village deities, being worshipped whenever vows are realized, unexpected good fortune occurs, or calamity befalls the village, or a family in it. A monolith, or rudimentary rock, is so very rare in the plains of Bengal, that when met with it inspires both awe and veneration among the superstitious classes, who readily connect it with some god they worship. At Mirzápúr, in Bhowál, an upright slab, called Siddhí Mádhava, is worshipped by all the inhabitants, Muhammadans sacrificing cocks, and Hindus swine. At Sunnárgáon a black basaltic slab, let into a wall, is believed to restore stolen property, if whitewashed, and a few prayers mumbled afterwards. Hindus, however, do not restrict their veneration to big stones, but worship any object remarkable for its size or antiquity. Thus the monster Muhammadan cannon standing in the chauk of Dacca, is supplicated as a male spirit whose consort, another similar piece of ordnance, lies sunk in the river. Any person anxious to obtain a favour has only to stain the muzzle and breech with red-lead, and his wish will be fulfilled.

It is as the village guardians, and family benefactors, that these deities are usually worshipped; but when epidemic diseases break out, causing sickness and mortality in their homes, it is to them that supplication is made. Kálí, at first a Grám-devata of the aboriginal races, has become the Rákhya, or Bhadra Kálí, the protectrix of every Bengali village, to whom prayers and sacrifices are offered on the outbreak of any pestilence. The following incident was witnessed in 1874. At the great Váruṇí fair, cholera appeared, causing many traders and buyers to leave. The zamíndárs, bankers, and other interested parties, accordingly agreed to celebrate a special worship in honour of Kálí, not only to propitiate her, but also in hope of restoring confidence, and of bringing back the deserters. Money being freely subscribed, and professional singers hired, an image of the goddess was paraded throughout the fair, after which an operatic entertainment was given at which crowds of people attended. The cholera, which had been only sporadic, ceased, and the stoppage was attributed to the beneficent Kálí.

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[1] The angel Jabráíl (Gabriel) acts in the same capacity for Muhammadan children.

Ṣítala, the personification of smallpox, is held in especial honour, for an annual festival, held on the first Chaitra, about the middle of March, is assigned to her, and the Málákárs, who officiate on this day, also worship her whenever a villager sickens with the disease.

Chamárs, however, are singular in not worshipping either Kálí or Ṣítala, in times of síckness. When any febrile disorder appears among them, the women observe a ceremony, called Jar-Jarí, to appease the anger of Jar Asura, who causes fever.

It is to be noticed that none of the above-mentioned Grám-devatas have properly any temples, or special priests. In Bengal it is the caste Bráhman, in Bihár a Chaṭiyá, or Bhakht, who officiates, when required; but it is a recent innovation for a sanctuary to contain the idol, and for Patit Bráhmans to earn a livelihood by tending it. In every instance the stone, slab, or shrine, is placed beneath a tree, or in a grove, consecrated to the particular Grám-devata.

18. The transition to a regular worship of individual trees was a natural development of the same belief. Mr. Fergusson considers that the worship of trees was derived by the Bráhmans from the aboriginal races, and, during the Buddhist supremacy, adopted as one of the most distinctive peculiarities of their creed. When Buddhism was driven out of India, the worship of trees survived, and still flourishes, forming an important part in the daily services of the inhabitants. It is difficult to determine the reasons for the selection of particular trees, or shrubs, and their consecration to certain gods and spirits; but some inherent peculiarity may have influenced the people in their choice. Thus the vitality, beautiful foliage, and quivering leaves of the Pipal, the branches and capillary roots of the Banyan, the fragrant flowers of the Vakula, and the medicinal virtues of the Bela, would naturally impress the simple forest tribes. The Seorhá, sacred to Bura-Buri, being a dioecious plant, would, for this reason, excite wonder and reverence.

The Gujálí, or Ṣál, the favourite tree of the Kochh Mandáí, and Dravidian tribes generally, provides not only the most valuable timber for house-building, but the most perfect shade. The popular belief that a grove of Ṣál proves at certain seasons most unhealthy by causing a deadly fever, was another reason of its being regarded with the deepest veneration. In one instance the Gujálí has acquired an exceptional position in the eyes of the Hindus. At the north end of the great tank of Rámpál stands a tall umbrageous tree, the only one of its kind in that quarter, said to have been planted by the Bráhmans from Kanauj. It is not a patriarchial tree, but the two stems now growing are shoots from the parent root. Whenever a Hindu, or Muhammadan, villager obtains his desires, he pours oil on the root, daubs it with red-lead, and passing makes obeisance, touching the earth with his forehead.

It is hard to ascertain what are the precise ideas entertained by Hindus regarding these different trees,[1] but the general prejudice against cutting down, or approaching them after nightfall, indicates the belief that good or evil spirits are embodied there. The Vaṭa, Pipal, and Deva-dáru are the trees usually preferred by the male Brahma-daitya, or Bhúta, as well as by the female Ṣankhiní, or fairy, and Pretní, or bogey. When the large-horned owl is heard hooting from one of these trees it is popularly said to be the shriek of an evil spirit.

It often happens when a pair of these ill-omened birds take possession of a village tree that the villagers become so demoralised, through terror, as not to leave their homes after dark, while the children scream at every sound. It might be thought that birds proving such a nuisance would be shot, but no Hindu is so impious as to do so, and it is left to any passing European to rid them of the birds.

It is a curious fact that one of the latest outgrowths of corrupt Vaishnavism is the veneration for trees. The Darwesh Faqír sect will not permit a leaf, or twig, to be plucked from the trees growing within the Ákháras, although flowers are the ordinary offerings at the tomb of a Mahant.

19. The worship of animals is still extensively observed in Bengal. The cow receives divine honours at least twice a year, on the first of Baisákh, and the second of the moon in Jyeshṭha. The most severe penance is inflicted on any one killing it, even by misadventure; but starvation, ill-treatment, and cruelty go unpunished.

Monkeys of every species are deemed sacred, and may not be killed; but especial honour is paid to the Langúr, or Hanumán (*Presbytis entellus*), although no particular day is assigned for this purpose. The Hanumán of Hindu mythology, represented as a son of the wind, or an incarnation of Váyu, the wind god, is invoked by all sailors and fishermen; and when a calm occurs, the Manjhí, or steersman, shouts "Ai Hanumán!" instead of whistling as the British tar does.

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[1] The following are the sacred trees of the Hindus :—

Áṣvattha (Pipal)	*Ficus religiosa.*	Nimba (Ním)..	*Melia Azadīracta.*
Vaṭa.. ..	*Ficus Indica.*	Vilva (Bela) ..	*Aegle marmelos.*
Vakula ..	*Mimusops elengi.*	Tulasí ..	*Ocymum sanctum.*
Harítakí ..	*Terminalia chebula.*	Deva-dáru ..	*Uvaria longifolia.*
Ámalaka ..	*Phyllanthus emblica.*		

20. It is, however, to Manasa Deví, the dreaded Queen of snakes, that the natives of Bengal pay the most marked respect. To her the whole month of Ṣrávan (July and August) is hallowed, and all classes, from the Bráhman to the Chaṇḍál, adore her. If Mr. Fergusson is correct in his supposition that tree and serpent worship is one of the very earliest known, we have in Bengal at the present day a most perfect and uncorrupted example of this ancient cultus. There is perhaps no class so strict in attending to all the minutiæ of her worship as the Kulina Bráhmans of Bikrampúr. Manasa Deví is usually represented with four arms, grasping a cobra in each hand, with the beautiful, but deadly, Bungarus fasciatus, twisted round her neck, and with her feet resting on a goose. She is regarded as a daughter of Ṣiv—hence one of her titles, Ṣiva Ja—and the husband of Jarat Káru. Two plants, common in Bengal, are sacred to her, the Síj, or *Euphorbia ligularia*, and the Nág-phaní, or *Cactus*[1] *Indicus*. The acrid, milky juice of the former is employed as a cure for snake-bites, and the fleshy joints of the latter bear a striking resemblance to a cobra with expanded hood. The fifth of Ṣrávan is the Nág-panchamí; but the last day of that month, or Sankránt, is dedicated to her. For these fête days the Sámperia, or snake-charmers, are engaged, who make the tame snakes crawl about, and go through the stereotyped performance, before the spot on which the rice, milk, sugar, and fruits are displayed. Where there is a Sthán, or shrine, with an image of the goddess, buffaloes, pigeons, or turtle are sacrificed; but the Chaṇḍáls are singular in proffering swine. No conscientious Hindu ever kills a snake, and it is reckoned very meritorious to place milk and sugar near the hole occupied by a cobra.

21. A people so prone to conceive embodied spirits in trees and animals, naturally endowed with divine attributes the rivers which fertilized their fields, brought grain and firewood, and supplied fish and turtle for their use. Throughout the Delta the Ganga Pújah, or worship of the river Ganges, is one of the most popular and ancient observances. The goddess is invoked daily; but the merit of worshipping her is greately enhanced if performed at the full moons of Baisákh, Jyeshṭha, Kártik, and Mágh, and on the thirteenth of the waning moon of Chaitra. Her descent to earth is commemorated on the Dashará, the tenth of the waxing moon of Jyeshṭha (May and June). It is asserted that bathing in the sacred stream has the virtue of conferring blessings such as no imagination can conceive, while the sight, name, or touch of Ganga cleanses from all sin. Formerly barren women made offerings to the goddess, and vowed that if blessed with children one would be cast into the river as a

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[1] The *Cactus* was introduced into India by the Portuguese.—Royle.

thank-offering; but now-a-days, although more humane ideas prevail, the worship has lost none of its reputed efficacy.

The Jal-palaní, or close fishing season, lasting from the first to the tenth of Mágh, was originally a holiday in honour of Ganga; but at present her worship is chiefly observed on the tenth day, when a kid is thrown into the river.

The old Brahmaputra is worshipped with similar veneration, and the great bathing day, the eighth of the waxing moon of Chaitra, attracts many thousands from all parts of Lower Bengal. The bathing Ghát, sanctified by a well-known Puránic myth, is at Nángalbandh. When the moon is in a certain Nakshatra, or lunar mansion, and the eighth of the moon falls on a Friday, immersion at this spot cleanses from every sin.

The most famous festival, however, in Eastern Bengal is that held in honour of Varuṇa, the god of waters, on the full moon of Kártik (October and November), when devout Hindus bathe at the Yoginí Ghát̤, where formerly the Dhullasari, Lakhya, and Brahmaputra rivers united. The religious ceremony has come to be regarded as merely the formal inauguration of the great fair commencing on that day, to which merchants and dealers from every part of Northern India bring wares and merchandize for sale.

There are other rivers, for instance the Gaṇḍakí and Karatoyá, to which Hindus resort; but the number of pilgrims is yearly decreasing. Other devotees repair to the sacred rivulet flowing from the hill of Ṣítákhund, in the Chittagong district, or to the adjacent Balwákhund, the "Brahma's burning founts" of *Lalla Rookh,* to atone for heinous sins.

Not satisfied with attributing a divine character to the rivers of their native land, the Hindus have peopled the waters themselves with animistic beings, who protect, or destroy, the unguarded boatmen. Khwájah Khizr and Pír Badr, Muhammadan water spirits, are objects of fear and worship to the Hindus; but the semi-Hinduized tribes have also conceived beings like the Lurline of German romance. The fisher races make sacrifices to one Khala kumárí,[1] a Naiad, who, dwelling in the deep pools and eddies, sucks in boats, and leaves none to tell the tale. The Chamárs, again, have created another Naiad, Jalka Deví, who not only swallows up boats, but inflicts diseases on land.

22. Besides these supernatural beings the natives have placed each trade and profession under the care of a tutelary deity to whom various powers are ascribed. Whenever business is slack, or prices low, the Hindu workman worships his god with similar ceremonies to those paid by the Roman artisan to his divinity, or by the mediæval Christian to his saint. The

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[1] Sanskrit, Khala, cruel; kumárí, maiden.

Káyaths and scribes worship Sarasvatí on the Ṣrí-panchamí; Gandha Baniks and Modís, Gandheṣvarí, a form of Durgá, on the full moon of Baisákh; Sánkhárís, Agastya Muní, on the last day of Bhádra; and Kumárs, Kámárs, and other mechanics, Viṣvakarma. The ceremonies observed at these trade festivals bear a striking resemblance to one another. The day, always kept a close holiday, is often preceded, or followed, by one or more idle days. When the service is to be performed, the tools, implements, and machinery, being washed and smeared with red-lead and sandal-wood powder, are heaped in a pyramid, with a lighted lamp in front and oblations composed of garlands and bouquets of flowers, rice, fruit, and sweetmeats arranged on every side. On these occasions the caste Bráhman attends, and having invoked a blessing, receives a trifling fee. The most important of these trade jubilees is the Dhullisari,[1] on the first of Báisákh. It is kept by the Tánti, Dhobí, and Sutár castes, and all who spin, weave, or make use of cotton, and lasts for three days. The goddess is now identified with Durgá; but formerly she was the divinity supplying the water used for bleaching purposes. Her image (pratimána), erected by public subscription, is placed in a quarter of the city called Sútrapúr, and samples of cotton fabrics, as well as a selection of trade implements, being exhibited, are ornamented with fruits and vegetables.

Besides the various ceremonies already mentioned, the agricultural classes practise many superstitious rites to ensure a bountiful harvest, ward off the attacks of insects, mildew, smut, and other parasitic diseases, and protect the fields from hailstones. Of all the rural festivals none is more popular than the Vástu Pújah, on the Paush Sánkrant, when three Anṣas of Ṣiv, as they are now called, are worshipped, in the hope of securing seasonable rains and luxuriant crops. On the outskirts of the village a terrace is raised, as the "bedí," or altar, of the officiating priest, around which plantain stems are inserted, and fruits and flowers strewn. On this same day the Chaṇḍáls keep a ceremony peculiar to themselves, and of unknown origin. The village "bedí," usually a permanent structure, is often resorted to by the husbandman anxious about his crops, who, after planting a branch of the Jívala (Odina Wodier), makes offerings of milk, sugar, and rice. Bráhmans also observe a worship called the Vástu Pújah when the foundation of a house is dug, or a tank excavated, which appears to be identical with the above.[2]

When the fields are yellow with harvest, in November, a curious procession of peasants may be seen in any agricultural hamlet, carrying a straw figure, inside of which are dead flies, mosquitoes, and a Khaliṣa[1] fish, and led by a man beating a sieve, chanting "Bhála ai, Burá jái; Mashá, Mácchi dúr jái!" which may be translated, "Good come, Evil go; mosquitoes, flies, depart away!"

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[1] Either from the river of that name, or from the Sanskrit Dhavala, white, beautiful, and Iṣvarí, goddess.

[2] For further information see "J. A. S. of Bengal," xxxix, 199.

In other districts of Bengal this revel is known as Alakshmí, or bad luck.

23. In passing from the worship of animals, trees, and rivers to that of the spirits of the dead, we are transported from a primitive to a later belief, and from a conception of simple races to one upon which the attention of the wisest is still engaged. The worship of the Manes is intermediate between that of Bhútas and idolatry. As Sir J. Lubbock points out, in uncivilized societies, when there were no great differences of rank, deceased spirits would indeed scarcely rise beyond the dignity of ghosts; but under a more settled government the ghosts of the great would tend to become gods.[2] The worship of ancestral spirits is one of the oldest phases of Hindu belief, and flourished for ages before it had entered the mind of any one to bestow divine honours on the spirits of the great. Menu regards this worship with especial reverence. An oblation, he says,[3] by Bráhmans to their ancestors transcends an oblation to the deities, because the latter is considered as the opening and completion of the former. Hindus are taught that the soul emancipated from the body becomes a Preta, or ghost, remaining in charge of Yama until the Sráddha, or obsequial ceremonies, are performed, when it ascends to the heaven of the Pitṛís, and reanimating another body, receives the just reward, or punishment, of its former deeds.

The observance of the Sráddha is incumbent on the head of a house, and the yearning of every Hindu is to leave a son who will perform the ceremony necessary to ensure his father's felicity. At the obsequial rite, offerings of cakes, flesh, and other viands, along with libations of water, must in the first instance be presented to the ancestors, and then to the general body of the progenitors, of mankind.[4] On each of the ten days after death, the nearest-of-kin offers an obsequial oblation, and on the Ekádaṣí, or eleventh day, a special service is performed at which Bráhmans are feasted. With the Bráhmanical order, this is the purificatory ceremonial; but with the Ṣúdras, as well as most unclean castes, it is postponed to the thirtieth day, the latest on which it can be held. The Vaiṣyas of Daçca, however, keep it on the expiration of fourteen days; the Chaṇḍáls, like the Bráhmans, after ten. But there are many varieties of Ṣráddha, the most important, the Sapiṇḍana, being celebrated on the first anniversary of the person's decease. In the last half of Bhádra (August and September), immediately before the Daṣahará, the Mahálaya Ṣráddha is annually observed in honour of all the Pitṛís, and many other seasons for the worship of the Manes are fixed by certain astronomical periods and events.

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[1] The *Trichopodus Colisa.*

[2] "Origin of Civilization," p. 339.

[3] Menu, iii, 203.

[4] Wilson's "Religion of the Hindus," ii, 61.

The spirits of Bráhmans at once pass into the heaven of Pitṛís, while those of Ṣúdras and vile castes go through an innumerable series of new births, before arriving at that stage of perfect purity when they become reunited with the world of disembodied spirits. Púrva Janma, or Metempsychosis, is universally accepted without producing any moral restraint on the lives or morals of the people. The two great sects worshipping Ṣiv and Vishnu, or their counterparts, have promulgated the doctrines that observance of the annual festivals, pilgrimages to sacred places, and adoration of Bráhmans, will compensate for sins, however heinous, and release all who practise them from any transmigrations. By this Bráhmanical system Yama has been dethroned, and his authority usurped by the ęmissaries of Harí and Ṣiv. The uneducated classes draw no distinction between Pretas, or ghosts, and Bhútas, or evil spirits, although the former are properly spirits of the dead, the latter subordinate servants of the gods. If the Ṣráddha has not been properly performed, the Preta haunts the place of death, and, lodging in a tree, or ruined building, eventually becomes a Bhúta, without power or versatility.

The Ṣráddha thus becomes a solemn obligation, and the son, or nearest-of-kin, deems it of paramount importance to discharge all its formalities. The expense of fulfilling this religious duty is often so heavy as to force the son to incur debt and burden the family with liabilities requiring many years of industry to pay off. The detailed bill, given below,[1] was paid by a native

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[1]

	Rs.	a.	p
Present to Guru Ṭhákur	8	0	0
„ Purohit and assistants	31	0	0
,, officiating Bráhman	12	8	0
Bulls borrowed for the occasion	17	4	0
Goála for ghí, curds, and "khír"	145	0	0
Modí for gur, sugar, and sweetmeats	38	14	9
Rice, dál, and chúrá	15	0	0
Fish and vegetables	7	8	0
To Kumár for pots	3	4	0
To Napít, Dhobá, Bhúinmálí	4	4	0
"Dakshiná" before eating	4	14	3
Miscellaneous	5	15	9
Total ..	Rs. 293	8	9

doctor, earning twenty rupees a month, and who had many poor relatives dependent on him.

24. The veneration paid to Bráhmans, and to the sacred cord they wear, has fortunately died away; but by the masses they are still regarded as men whose lives are passed in meditation and religious exercises, whose blessing is auspicious, and ministration indispensable at every festival and domestic occurrence. The Kulin Bráhmans, being a very exclusive people, generally live in villages apart, while the executive priests reside in the midst of their flocks, and can only be distinguished from the peasantry around by the sacred cord. The people are always civil and obedient to the Kulin Bráhmans; but having few interests in common, their mutual relations are formal and lukewarm. Bráhman landlords are often considerate and liberal to their ryots, although there is a greater gulf between the two than in the case of Ṣúdra landlords.

The Purohit, or domestic priest, rarely an educated man, shares in all the joys and sorrows of his flock, and although sanctimonious is often immoral in character. In spite of these failings he is looked up to by the caste he serves as no other Bráhman is, while disrespect and disobedience are unknown. The Bráhmans of Eastern Bengal, as a class, are addicted to smoking Indian hemp, and to sensuality, vices originating from their idle lives and polygamous laws. But however profligate the Bráhman may be, the Ṣúdras still worship and employ him, as they cannot sever the connection with one who is indispensable. Cringing as is the veneration of the Ṣùdra for his Purohit, it is independence when compared with the grovelling self-abasement of the Vaishnavas in presence of their Gosáin, who is regarded as infallible and incapable of doing any wrong. Still more extravagant is the adoration of a Bráhmaní, or other caste woman, at the impure assemblies of the Ṣákta, and Kiṣori Bhajana sects.

Besides these different classes of Bráhmans, individuals of the sacred order proclaiming a new gospel of salvation every now and then rise up, and win over crowds of credulous people. The following account of one of the best of these enthusiasts, who caused much excitement among the lower classes, is not only interesting but illustrative of the ignorance and gross credulity of the masses. In this instance the character personated, or which has been given by his followers, was previously assumed by his master.

Kálí Kumár Chakravarttí, a Ṣrotriyá Bráhman of Pátabhog, in Bikrampúr, was remarkable, even in his childhood, for his devotion to the god Harí. When six years old, Padma Lochana Ṭhákur, a Bráhman of Farrídpúr, reputed to be an incarnation of Harí, visited Pátabhog, and at a private interview is said to have imparted a special mystical power to the boy. When old enough, Kálí Kumár became a clerk in the banking house of one Bhakta Podár, and while filling this lowly office, announced that through the favour of Harí, he could perform miracles, such as cooking food without fire, and transforming a ball of clay into sugar. His fame gradually spread, and the villagers credited him with the power of curing the sick. His success in treating female disorders was most striking, and the credit of miraculously curing the wife of a rich Tálukdár was bruited throughout the country. Shortly afterwards Kálí Kumár relinquished his humble calling, and became manager of the Tálukdár's property. Mádhava Nág, and his wife, treated him as their son, lodging him in their own home. Gradually rising in reputation he is now looked up to as the most holy person in Bikrampúr, being worshipped by thousands as the real Harí. By the peasantry he is known as the Baṛa, while his deputy is called the Chhoṭá, Harí. He does not claim any special authority over diseases, but teaches that unfaltering faith in Harí, and continued prayers, will certainly ensure recovery from the most desperate illness. Bathing thrice a day, and avoiding certain heating articles of food are minor ordinances. Sometimes he varies the treatment by picking up a handful of earth, and ordering the patient to rub his body with it before bathing. In 1873 Kálí Kumár made the pilgrimage to Jaganáth, when nearly three hundred persons voluntarily accompanied him, and in turn ministered to his wants. In 1874, on the Paush Sankránt and Ṣrí Panchamí festivals, as many as twenty thousand persons, chiefly women, of the lower classes, assembled at his residence at Rájnagar to worship him; while, during the rains, as many as a hundred and fifty boats were to be seen moored off his ghát̥. The higher, as well as the lower, castes apply to him for medical advice, the former only when the Kabíráj and English doctor have failed to give relief. It is said that from lack of faith in Harí, and doubts regarding the sacred character of Kálí Kumár, the higher castes derive less benefit from a visit to the holy man of Rájnagar, than peasants and artisans do. Kálí Kumár always denies that he is a god, and rebukes those who address him as one; but the multitude persist in their belief. Fees are never exacted from the pilgrims, but they are recommended to evince their faith by buying Batásá, and other sweetmeats, for the poorer brethren. When his daughter married, he declined to accept a present of one thousand rupees collected for her by a subscription, limited to one rupee.

A character such as this is difficult to understand. Although no pecuniary gain is derived from his teaching, all his wants are anticipated, and he has found a comfortable home supplied with every necessary. It is hard to stigmatise Kálí Kumár as an impostor, for, however absurd his treatment of disease, the faith in Harí that he inculcates is a great advance on the idolatry and demonolatry of the lower castes. We may regret the possibility of such men thriving, and being worshipped as divine beings; but the improvement he has effected excites the hope that others, announcing a higher creed, will soon spring up, and sweep away men like Kálí Kumár Chakravarttí.

The list of superstitious rites practised by the inhabitants of Bengal, and derived from aboriginal races, might be indefinitely extended, for there are no bounds to the credulity of the ignorant. It is remarkable, however, that neither the worship of Grám-devatas, nor the offering of bloody sacrifices to evil spirits, debar the worshipper from participation in the religious observances of his caste. Toleration has gone so far that even the Purohit countenances many of these rude ceremonies, although at others the suppliant officiates himself. Among a few of the very lowest tribes evil spirits are the only divinities, but by the large majority of the population they are considered subordinate to the gods of the Hindu Pantheon. It is here that the non-Aryan impress has been so deeply written on the religion of the people. It was not by ignoring, but by blending the popular belief with their own, that the Bráhmans spread their influence and authority, and laid the foundation of that strange and corrupt faith now professed by the Hindus of Bengal. The village gods, the spirits of land and water, the Dryad of the forest, and the queen of snakes, were too deeply stamped on the inmost feelings of the aborigines to be easily effaced, and it was a far-sighted policy to recognise a Hindu deity in every village god, and Kálí in every guardian spirit.

It is not to be inferred, however, that the masses in Bengal are not Hindu in religion.

The religion taught by the Bráhmans is the modern phase of their belief, but it has not taken so deep root as to stifle all affection for the older forms. The large majority of the Ṣúdras and working classes have embraced the Kṛishna Mantra, or creed, which affirms that Kṛishna is the one omnipotent god; but the Bráhmans, Vaidyás, and Káyaths are enrolled under the banner of Ṣiv, or of his Ṣáktís.

Without entering into the controversy as to the date when Vishnu, Ṣiv, and the gods of the Hindu Pantheon were introduced into India, it may be stated, without arousing any difference of opinion, that for at least eight hundred years a perpetual warfare has been maintained between the followers of

Vishnu on the one hand and of Ṣiv on the other. Professor Wilson was of opinion that none of the present popular religions of India assumed their actual state earlier than the time of Ṣankara Ácharya, in the eighth or ninth century, and it is certain the great Vaishnava teachers lived in a comparatively modern age. Rámánuja dates from the twelfth century, Mádhava-áchárya from the thirteenth, and Vallabha-áchárya from the sixteenth. It is in the Puráṇas which followed, or accompanied, the teachings of these masters, that the bitter rivalry between the followers of Vishnu and Ṣiv is set forth. In the Vishnu Puráṇa, Vishnu is the Param-eṣvara; in the Linga and Ṣaiva Puráṇas generally, Ṣiv is the one Supreme God. In the still more modern Brahma-Vaivartta Puráṇa Kṛishna becomes pre-eminent.

Vishnu, in one or other of his various forms, is the most popular god in Bengal. In his Avatára, or incarnation, of Ráma, and more frequently in that of Kṛishna, the divine herdsman, he is adored by millions of Hindus. All the most popular festivals, all the most venerated shrines, and all the most honoured fraternities are his. In 1811, Ward[1] estimated the followers of Vishnu in Bengal at five-sixteenths of the Hindus. In 1828, H. H. Wilson calculated[2] them at one-fifth, and in 1872 Dr. Hunter[3] at from one-fifth to one-third of the whole Hindu population. No image of Vishnu is now-a-days called by his name, but the Vishnu-pada, or footprint, is still adored at Gayá, and is the ordinary relic in all temples of Kṛishna.

A carefully prepared list of 384 temples and shrines in the Dacca district shows that—

227 were sacred to Kṛishna, as Harí, Giri-dhárí, Ṣrídhara, Vásudeva, Dámodara, or Lakshmi Náráyaṇa.
16 to Rádhá-Mádhava, Rádhá-Vallabha or Rádhá-Ramaṇa.
33 to Maháprabhu Chaitanya.
6 to Vishnu as Viṣvambhara, Ṣárnga-dhara, Jagad-dhátṛi, or Rája Rájeṣvara.
2 Ráma-Ṣíta.
2 Balaráma.
39 to Kálí.
38 to Mahádeva, or Ṣiv.
6 to Durga as Daṣa-bhujá, or Anna-púrna.
3 to Manasa Deví.
12 to Siddheṣvari, Nityánanda, Trináth, and Samádhi.

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[1] Ward's "Hindus," iii, 469. At p. 259 he computes them at a half of the Hindus.

[2] "Religious Sects," i, 152.

[3] "Orissa," i, 114.

Seventy-four per cent. belong to Kṛishna in one or other of his numerous forms, and only twenty-one per cent. to Kálí, Durga, and Ṣiv.

It is owing to the Bhágavat Purána, compiled in the twelfth century,[1] that Kṛishna has become the popular deity in Bengal. This celebrated work, translated into every language of India, is still one of the authorities most valued by all Vaishnavas. The form of Kṛishna worship instituted by Chaitanya and his successors is now predominant. Since his death in 1528 Chaitanya has been identified with Kṛishna, and this deification has been ratified by the Charitámṛita, written thirty years after his death. The moral and tolerant doctrines of this national teacher penetrated the hearts of the people, and roused an enthusiastic spirit that has unfortunately driven many into strange and perilous wanderings. Among the pure Ṣúdras there is less deviation from the original creed than among the lower mixed classes, who have always been neglected. The religious sentiments of the latter, instead of being properly guided, have been left to develop as fancy, or bias, disposed them. Whether this be a satisfactory explanation or not, it is certain that the corrupt, often immoral, sects now existing are chiefly patronised by the lower and most ignorant classes of the community. The equality of all men, a doctrine preached by Chaitanya, but repudiated by the Gosáins, has been restored by most of the later offshoots of Vaishnavism, and with them no distinction conferred by birth, wealth, or prescription, is ever recognised.

The principal Vaishnava sects in Eastern Bengal are eleven in number. Three are met with throughout India, namely, the Rámánuja, Rámavat, and Nímávat, but the eight following are peculiar to Bengal:—

1. Vaishnava.
2. Báyan-Kaupína.
3. Kiṣorí-Bhajana.
4. Jagat-Mohaní.
5. Spashṭa-Dáyaka.
6. Kaví-Indra Parivára.
7. Báolá.
8. Darwesh-Faqír.

The Kiṣorí-Bhajana and Spashṭa-Dáyaka were founded by fallen Bráhmans, the Jagat-Mohaní by a fisherman, the Kaví-Indra Parivára by a Ṣudra, the Báolá by a Chaṇḍál peasant, and the Darwesh-Faqír by a Karmakár. It is remarkable that the Báyan-Kaupína, Kaví-Indra Parivára, and Spashṭa-Dáyaka have sprung from trivial, but, in the eyes of the Vaishnavas, significant acts of the Guru, or spiritual leader. Until more precise information is obtained regarding the peculiar doctrines of these Vaishnava offshoots, it is impossible to explain how sects, originating from such trifling blunders, can survive and attract disciples. The Kaví-Indra Parivára sect includes many intelligent merchants who doubtless are pleased to belong to a religious body, rejecting celibacy and seclusion from the world; but it is not apparent what greater attraction it holds out than the primitive Vaishnava belief. The reason assigned for the existence of the Darwesh-Faqír order is that it admits any outcast, even a Muhammadan, into communion. It claims to be Vaishnava, and to follow the teaching of the Charitámṛita, but judging by the habits of the Udásís their chief peculiarities are love of dirt and avoidance of cleanliness, partiality for spirits and the encouragement of that vice in others, and refraining from shedding blood, or injuring vegetable life.

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[1] Wilson's "Vishnu Purána," xxxi.

The Vaishnava orders of Hindustan repel the religious classes of Bengal, who support but do not join them. The Rámánuja, Rámavat, and Nímávat fraternities choose disciples of Hindustání birth and high caste. The Rámánuja profess to admit Bráhman, Kshatriyá, and clean Ṣúdra tribes; the Rámavat exclude all Bengali castes, but enroll Hindustání Ṣúdras; and the Nímávat, rejecting even Kulin Bráhmans, enlist any clean Ṣúdra of Upper India. Mendicants belonging to these three classes are treated everywhere with respect, and receive alms from all ranks. The Dacca Rámavats, moreover, are entirely supported by rich Bengali gentlemen, and their Ákháṛá is repaired by contributions raised by the Hindu population. Yet none of these orders have any hold on the affections of the masses, or any influence over their spiritual lives.

RÁMÁNUJAS.

The Rámánujas, or Ṣrí Sampradáyís, are not numerous in Bengal, and in Dacca have only one monastery, called the Urdú Ákhárá, from the quarter of the city where it is situated, or Ṣárngár Ṣthán, from the particular deity to whom it is consecrated. The Mahant, Rám Prasád Dás Pandit, is a Kanaujiya Bráhman of Benares, who, while studying with his Guru at Murshídábád in 1864, was deputed to supervise the Dacca establishment. He exercises a general control over all Rámavat Ákháṛás in and around Dacca, and rightfully claims to be the Guru of that sect.

The Urdú Ákháṛá is endowed with landed property yielding about four hundred rupees a year. It was founded in the seventeenth century by one Manasa Rám, and the sanctuary was dedicated to Ṣárnga-dhara, or Vishnu the archer, but it now possesses images of Baldev or Balaráma, Govinda Dev or Kṛishna, Rámá, and Jagannáth. The Ákháṛá is a curious storied building, resembling in many respects the private residence of a rich Hindu. The sanctuary, reached by a steep staircase, forms one side of an arcaded court, remarkable for its cleanliness and good order. The pillars and walls, overlaid with the beautiful cement of the Mughal period, are disfigured by hideous paintings of Hanumán and his devilish crew, while the arcades are ornamented with more refined portraits of Hindu deities from Jaipúr in Rájputana. The whole place is pervaded by an air of peace and tranquillity, accompaniments rarely found in a home of Indian devotees.

The Rámánuja sect comprises three grades of disciples—the Brahmácharya, Upakurvváṇa, and Naishṭhika. A novice must undergo a probation of six months before he can be initiated, and he must either be a Bráhman, Kshatriyá, or Vaiṣya, no Ṣúdra ever being admitted to full privileges. A religious student beginning to read the Vedas is styled Brahmácharya, and prohibited from shaving, paring the nails, or taking any thought of the body. He may continue in this probationary stage for life, or until he masters the doctrines of the sect; but when the period of pupilage is terminated, he may marry. The birth of a son, however, obliges him to leave his home and become a Vánaprastha, or dweller in the forest, passing an austere and solitary life, only broken by an occasional visit to his Guru. It can readily be imagined that a cheerless life like this has scarcely any attractions for the multitude, and it is an undoubted fact that many who have professed "to observe through life the practice of study, poverty, and continence," have joined the ranks of the vagrant and disreputable bands of mendicants roving over the length and breadth of India. Should he wish to enter upon the higher life the Brahmácharya either becomes a Naishṭhika, one practising asceticism till death, or an Upakurvváṇa, one who lives the cenobitical life of an Udásí in the house of his Guru, and continues the study of the Vedas.

At the Dacca Ákháṛá the disciple is marked at the initiatory rite[1] with the Ṣankha of Vishnu on the left shoulder, and with the Chakra on the right. The stamp is made of eight metals (Ashṭa-dhátu), gold, silver, copper, brass, tin, lead, iron, and zinc (dastá); but the Dwáraka stamp is said to be an iron one.

The Rámánujas are most punctilious about the privacy of their meals, and should any one see or speak to them while so engaged, the food is either thrown away or buried. At meals, silken or woollen garments, never cotton, must be worn, and no one can taste anything without permission of the Guru. They will only eat food cooked by a Bráhman of their own sect, but do not reject articles prepared with "ghí" by a Rámávat. The Rámávat, again, takes rice cooked by any Rámánuja, or by any other Rámávat, whether he be by caste a Bráhman, Kshatriyá, or Vaiṣya. A Rámánuja will not drink from the water-vessel of a Bengali Kulina Bráhman, and, although the latter is a member of the sect, will not touch food cooked by him. The Rámánujas are more respectable, and more respected, than the Rámávats, never stupefying themselves with gánjha like the latter.

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[1] Called Tapta-mudrá.

In Dacca it is computed that there are about twenty Gṛihí, or domestic Brahmácháryas, and twenty-five vagrant ones, who roam from one shrine of Vishnu to another, living on the alms of the charitable.

RÁMÁVAT.[1]

This is essentially a Hindustání sect, no native of Bengal being admitted into its ranks, although its Ákháṛás are wholly supported by the contributions of rich Bengali families. As a rule the Rámávats are recruited from among the Kanaujiya Bráhmans, but other castes are occasionally received into religious communion, it remaining optional with any one to decline eating with them. At a casual visit to a Rámávat Ákháṛá sixteen men and one Bráhmaní woman were interrogated, when thirteen men were found to be Hindustání Bráhmans; one a Sannyásí, and probably a Bráhman; one an Uriya Chhatrí, and one an Ahír. Women are sometimes inducted, and treated as sisters, but should any glaring immorality be detected the sinners are expelled.

The largest and most frequented Rámávat Akháṛá in Dacca, called Lál Bihárí, after one of the names of Kṛishná, has for thirty years been ruled by Har Bhojan Dás, a Kanaujiya Bráhman from Ayodhyá, the disciple of a former Mahant, who when dying bestowed "Upadeṣa," or religious initiation, on this his chosen successor. Another popular Ákháṛá, known as "Ṣama Sundara," or Kṛishna, has as its Mahant a Kanaujiya Bráhman, whose "chela," or disciple, is a Bráhman of Faizábád.

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[1] Regarding the peculiar doctrines of the Rámávats, see Wilson's "Religion of the Hindus," vol. i, 46–68.

The founder of this sect was Rámánand, the disciple of the still more famous Rámanuja, who lived towards the end of the fourteenth century of our era. Notwithstanding that discipline is stricter in this than in sects of Bengali origin, the Mahant is not worshipped, but only obeyed and respected as a holy man, while adoration is paid to Vishnu, or Rámá-Chandra, alone. He is the patron god of the Rámávat community, but his worship has in some instances been supplanted by that of Harí, who is identified with Kṛishna.

There are different grades among Rámávats, the most austere being the "Tapási,[1] erroneously styled Jogís; Ashmen, the early English travellers happily called them. They wander throughout India almost naked, smeared over with ashes, and stupefied with gánjha, refusing to bend the knee before any idol, or any potentate, or to accept lodgings; but residing under a tree, in ruins, or among tombs—wherever, indeed, shelter is afforded, and a prospect of food invites them.

The majority of the sect call themselves Rámávat Sádhu, or ascetics, who, in Bengal at least, dress in questionable taste, at the most wearing a rope round the waist, and a cloth of scanty dimensions round the loins. A few shave the head and beard, but the greatest number cherish a profusion of long tangled locks rolled round the head like a turban, or wound in coils and tied in a large knot over the left ear.

Celibacy is strictly enjoined, but there are no more dissolute and licentious rogues to be met with, even in Bengal, than these ascetics. Aspirants for admission into the society have to undergo a period of probation, the Mahant, who alone can initiate, first satisfying himself of their sincerity and worthiness; but after admission the novice may allow his passions to run riot, if he does not publicly scandalise his brethren. At initiation the new convert is enrolled in a gotra, called "Aichittra,"[2] to which all Rámávats belong.

Rámávats are generally very illiterate, and can seldom read or write. Certain of them falter through a Nágarí book, but few understand what they read. The rule of the sect is contained in the pages of the Rámáyana, the Ṣrí Bhágavat, and the Bhágavat-gítá. Bríndában is the headquarters of Rámávats worshipping Kṛishna; Ayodhyá of those adoring Ráma.

The chief aim of the Rámávats is the conclusion of a pilgrimage to all the holy shrines of India. From Dwáraká to Ṣítá-Khund, in Chittagong, and from Gangútrí to Rámeṣvara, the enthusiast wanders without fear, picking up an uncertain meal from any random traveller. Gánjha is their chief solace, and it is surprising with what impunity they smoke it in their journeyings, and when stationary in their Ákháṛás. If, as is generally believed, Indian hemp induces insanity, it is strange that a Rámávat is rarely admitted into a lunatic asylum. Natives addicted to its use maintain that if abundance of highly nutritious food be taken at the same time, gánjha may be smoked with perfect safety for years. There seem to be grounds for this assertion, and if care be taken to regulate the quantity consumed to the daily food, no bad effects are produced. The Rámávat is usually fuddled, but this state is regarded as religious abstraction; and gánjha, according to him, by stimulating the imaginative faculties, and determining the ideas, fixes them on the god he is always contemplating. As with the Vaishnavas his highest ambition is to feel for Rámá a sensual and emotional desire, which it is the peculiar property of gánjha to impart. He therefore regards the smoking of the weed as an imperative duty, enabling him to abandon the world and its pleasures, and to live in continuous ecstatic contemplation of the deity.

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[1] From the Sanskrit Tapas, penance.

[2] Perhaps Ahi-jit, a name of Kṛishna.

The ordinary diet of a Sádhu consists of the following articles: —

Milk, 4 lbs.
Aṭá (wheat flour), 1½ lb.
Ghí (butter) 4 ounces.
Vegetables and fruit, *ad libitum.*

On this diet he can safely smoke five pipes of gánjha a day, and five at night, the quantity taken with each depending on the taste and nerves of the smoker, but a quarter of a tolá, or forty-five grains, is the average portion.

The ecstatic state is by these ascetics designated "Khiyál," a dreamy, sensual reverie, in which the emotional affections predominate; or "Ánanda," in which the mind is quiescent, and the devotee enjoys enchanting peace, and perfect resignation.

As with the Vaishnavas all forms of adoration, beyond the unceasing repetition of the name Ráma, or Harí, are deemed useless; but in every Ákháṛá there is an idol tended at regular hours, when Ṣankh shells are blown, and gongs sounded, while offerings of flowers and fruit are presented by the laity. Besides, in the courtyard there is usually a Tulasí plant, which is carefully cherished, and in the sanctuary a Ṣálagrám, sharing equal adoration with the idol.

The abstractions of the Sádhus are often so prolonged as to necessitate the use of a bamboo crutch (báns-ka-kúbṛí). Their necklaces, made of Rudráksha wood (*Eleaeocarpus ganitrus*), must consist of seventeen, nineteen, twenty-one, fifty-four, or a hundred and eight beads.

NÍMÁVAT.

This religious sect, one of the four primary divisions of the Vaishnava faith, has always been unpopular in Eastern Bengal, although it was formerly believed[1] to be the most numerous of the Vaishnava sects in Bengal, "with the exception of those which may be considered the indigenous offspring of that province."

In Dacca two Ákhạrás are still open; one, situated at Háthíghát̤, is about eighty years old. The first Mahant was one Balarám, a Hindustání Bráhman, the fourth in descent from whom is the present Mahant, H̱ar-dev Dás, and Adh-Gaur̤ Bráhman from Mírat. The other Ákhạrá, in Chaudharí Bazár, was built by one Kṛishná Moní Bairáganí, about twenty years ago.

This sect has few characteristics beyond its name, and the sectarial mark consisting of a circular black patch between two parallel yellow streaks.

In Dacca there are no Gṛihasthas, or secular members, and only four Viraktas, or cenobitical. Disciples are not enrolled from among Bengalis, the Kulin Bráhman even being rejected; but any Hindustání Bráhman, or clean Ṣúdra, is admitted. The Nímávats regard Mathurá and Jaipúr as the most sacred places of pilgrimage, and the Bhágavat as the chief religious book. Nágarí is generally understood, but Sanskrit is unknown. The chief occupation of the Viraktas is the preparation of "Bhog," or food for the idols, consisting of rice and pulse boiled together (Khichṛí), which is offered four times daily. After being presented, and prayers said, it is eaten by the Mahant and his disciples. The idols in the Ákhạrás are Jagannáth, Madana Gopála, Rádhá-Kṛishna, Balaráma, and Subhadra, the sister of Kṛishná.

VAISHNAVAS.

In February, 1485, during the reign of Jaláluddín Fath Sháh, was born Nimáí, the son of Jagannáth Miṣra, a Vaidika Bráhman of Silhet, and of Sachi his wife. His birth was preceded by many marvellous signs, while his infancy and boyhood were distinguished by events which portended his future eminence.

When twenty-four years old, he left his young wife, became a Vairági, and assumed the name of Chaitanya. He visited the sacred shrines of Mathurá and Bṛindában, where, by constant meditation on the adorable Kṛishna, he became subject to ecstatic visions, or fits of love, "Prema-pralápa," which eventually deranged his reason. From Mathurá he returned to Bengal, and after a short stay, proceeded on a pilgrimage to Kaṭak and Rámeṣvara, in the south of India. He finally settled at Kaṭak, where he died childless at the early age of forty-three.

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[1] Wilson's "Religious Sects of the Hindus," vol. i, 152.

The most devoted and most famous of his followers were Nityánanda of Nadiyá, and Advayánanda of Ṣántipúr on the Hughli.

The teaching of Chaitanya marks an era in the religious history of Bengal, and at the present day the large majority of the artisan and agricultural classes worship him as an incarnation of Vishnu under the names of Mahá-prabhu, the great teacher, and Gaur-Harí.

The spread of the religious doctrines of this reformer was rapid, many causes combining to favour it. Their simplicity, their virtual agreement with the religious ideas then prevalent in Bengal, the zeal and enthusiasm of the first missionaries, and the boundless credulity of the people, are the chief causes assigned by an able writer.[1] But the unsettled state of the province, the constant wars and civil commotions excited by rival Muhammadan races and factions, left the Hindu population at liberty to follow their own religious aspirations. During the forty-three years of Chaitanya's life, seven kings, of whom four were Abyssinian slaves, sat on the throne of Bengal.

For many generations the Bráhmans had left the masses uncared for, and without any national faith, save that of the terrible Ṣiv, his hateful consort, and a host of malevolent beings, haunting every glade, thicket, and river. Contumely and disdain were the prerogatives of the priesthood; submission and resignation of the timorous people. Under this tyranny the land groaned for centuries, but at last a glimmer broke in upon the thick darkness, foretelling the advent of a brighter and happier future. Chaitanya stirred the hearts of the people by his impassioned preaching, awakened new conceptions and desires, and proclaimed that all men were equal in the eyes of God; that the same One who made the Chaṇḍál made the Bráhman; and that philanthropy was the mainspring of society, the renovator of national life. He farther taught that caste was a fetter on social advancement, and the religion of the Bráhmans a stumbling-block to his countrymen. This blow levelled against caste had temporary effect, and for many years after Chaitanya's death no distinctions of race or colour were, it is said, permitted within the Vaishnava pale. As enthusiasm, however, declined, differences of birth and occupation were again recognised, and now caste prejudices are almost as deeply rooted among the Vaishnavas as with the worshippers of Ṣiv.

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[1] "Calcutta Review," vol. xv, 1851.

The chief novelty in the teaching of Chaitanya was Bhakti, or loving faith, a new element in Hinduism. The Vedantic philosophers had taught that in the knowledge of God consisted the only hope of deliverance from the bondage of sin; but, according to the new truth, those who believed in Kṛishna, who prayed to him without ceasing, and who reposed their whole confidence on him, were more secure of endless felicity than the master of all sciences and all philosophies.

Such was the gospel of the Silhet reformer. By the addition of many mystical and sensual interpretations, later ages have corrupted much that was ennobling and moral.

The text-book of the Vaishnavas is the "Chaitanya Charitámṛita" of Kṛishna Dás,[1] written in Bengali, and interspersed with quotations from the earlier works, "Ṣrí Bhágavat" and "Bhágavat-gíta." According to this work there are five stages of Bhakti, the higher, as with the Çúfís, being only attained by a few privileged individuals, after prolonged austerities and mortifications.

The five stages are:—

1. Ṣánta, or quietism, in which the Vaishnava enjoys perfect contentment and peace of mind, ever dwelling on the happiness of his lot, and grateful to Harí for his mercy.
2. Dásya, or the relation existing between a master and his purchased slave. In this stage the Vaishnava practises self-denial, dedicating his whole energies and thoughts to the honour of his god.
3. Sákhya, or friendship. Arriving at this stage the disciple worships Chaitanya as his bosom friend, and regards his own soul as an emanation from and a particle of the Paramátman, or supreme spirit.
4. Vátsalya, or affection towards offspring. In this stage the Vaishnava looks up to God, not as the common Father of all, but as his own father, to whom he is united by the natural bonds of affection, as subsist between a son and his earthly parent.
5. Mádhuriya, literally sweetness, the "efflorescence of Bhakti," as it has been named. In this, the highest and most exquisite condition, the disciple glows with the same uncontrollable desire that Kṛishna felt for the absent Rádha.

The introduction of this last grade of religious fervour has destroyed the moral influence of the creed by sanctifying, as it undoubtedly has done, immorality and gross sensuality. The pure and elevating principles of Chaitanya have been lost sight of, and at the present day the male and female mendicants of this popular sect are notorious for their profligacy and moral depravity.

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[1] Kṛishna Dás Kabíráj, a Baidyá by caste, wrote this synopsis A.D. 1557.

When Chaitanya died, his most enthusiastic disciples formed a society, consisting, it is said, of six Gosáins,[1] eight Kabírájs, and sixty-four Mahants, by whom the sect was organised, and a staff of assistants established in every district and town of Bengal. Their successors disseminated the Vaishnava creed throughout the province, and, penetrating among the wild tribes of the forest, converted many.

The highest rank in the hierarchy is that of the Gosáins, who are Bráhmans by caste, and claiming to be descendants of the six original Gosáins, the immediate successors of the Mahá-prabhu.

For many generations the three great centres of Vaishnavism have been Khardah, between Calcutta and Barrackpúr; Ṣánti-púr in Nadiyá, on the Bhágírathi; and Saidábád in the Murshídábád district. The first is the residence of the Gosáins, tracing their descent from Nityánanda; the second, of the children of Advayánanda; while the third is the home of a family who became Gosáins at a later date, as related in the following story.

Ganga Náráyana Áchárya and Ráma Kiṣora Chakravarttí were Gosáins, the former being a disciple of a Káyasth. When the Káyasth died, the Bráhmans refused to permit the body to be buried. The disconsolate widow prayed to the deceased Guru, claiming his interference. His spirit appeared, and commanded her to summon all the recusant Bráhmans to a meeting, at which, after a long and excited discussion, the spirit asked if any one present could produce the four threads of gold, silver, copper, and cotton, which were used to make the sacred cord. No one was able, so the spirit produced them. The Bráhmans, satisfied of his identity, confessed that he was entitled, though a Káyasth, to be venerated as a Guru, and his disciple to receive the same funeral rites at his death as a Bráhman, the pupil of a legitimate Gosáin.

Gosáins are hereditary leaders of the sect. They are married men, generally wealthy, their temples having been enriched by the munificence of the Hindu laity, and their revenue further increased by the contributions of millions of disciples, and by the inheritance of all property left by Bairágís. They are also prosperous traders and money-lenders. Bráhmans view them with contempt, a Kulin family being dishonoured by giving one a daughter in marriage.

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[1] Sanskrit, Go-svámi, a religious mendicant, an honorary title.

The Vaishnavas have had it revealed that Chaitanya was an incarnation of Vishnu, Nityánanda of Balaráma, the brother of Kṛishna, and Advayánanda of Mahádeva; and, futhermore, that the first assumed the rank of a Vaidika Bráhman, the second of a Ráṛhi, and the third of a Varendra.

The adoration paid to the heaven-born Gosáin, or Guru, is regarded as the essence of Vaishnavism, and differs in no respect from that offered to God Himself. The votaries, by surrendering themselves and all they possess, not only identify the Gosáin with the deity, but honour him as one possessed of more authority than Kṛishna himself. He is further venerated as being inherently a pure and exalted personage, unsullied by the vices in which he always freely indulges. Implicit faith in him, and incessant devotion, are the arms with which the Vaishnava has to wage war against the world and its temptations; and he is taught that, successfully overcoming all his enemies, he will at last enter upon that stage of Mádhuriya, for the attainment of which all true Vaishnavas maintain a life-long struggle.

The slavish adoration of the Gosáin, however, formed no part of Chaitanya's teaching, which inculcated that God was all in all, while the Gosáin was only the spiritual father[1] of his flock. The modern sentiment, copied from the Bráhmanical system, and probably adopted when the Gosáins had secured their hold over the people, is firmly believed in by millions at the present day, and the influence that they wield is as strong as that of the Jesuit priesthood.

The inferior agency that spreads and supports the peculiar doctrines of the sect is the Ádhikárí, or superintendent, who acts as deputy, initiates disciples within a certain circle, and collects fees. Under him are Faujdárs, whose business is the enlistment of proselytes, and whose activity is stimulated by a percentage of the subscriptions. Lastly, comes the Chhaṛí-dár, or usher of the rod, who is merely the messenger of the Faujdár.

The Gosáin, or his deputy, bestows the Mantra,[2] or sacred word, on the laíty. Any disciple, however, can confer Bhek,[3] an introductory ceremony peculiar to the Vaishnavas. No member can aspire to any stage of faith, or secure salvation after death, without the Mantra. The Bhek, on the other hand, is taken by those who resolve to spend a life of poverty and trial, without ties, and with few restraints, and is given to men, women, and boys over ten years of age. At this ceremonial, a new piece of cloth is wrapped round the waist of the neophyte, a "Kaupína" is triced between the legs, a stick, or switch, placed in his hands, a beggar's wallet given him to carry, and a necklace (mála) hung round his neck.

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[1] The Gosáin is generally styled Báp, father; the Faujdár Kuru, or uncle, from Bengali, Khuṛá.

[2] The Mantra is usually a monosyllable, a name, or attribute, of a god, or goddess. It is taken by both Vaishmavas and Ṣáktas, and certain religious ceremonies are always observed on that occasion. The Mantra must never be divulged to any one.

[3] The word Bhek is synonymous with the Sanskrit Bhek-lava and Víkshagrahaṇa, and is analogous to the Bhikshuka, or fourth Áṣrama of religious life. Bhek is probably a corruption of Víksha, sight. In this stage of life the votary rightly adopts the garb of a mendicant, retires from the world, and subsists on the charity of strangers.

As is the case with other Hindu sects, the Vaishnava laity is divided into two great classes, the Gṛihi Vaishnavas, or Boistubs, as they are popularly called, and Bairágís. The former marry and live as their neighbours; the Gosáins, and the large majority of the sect, belong to this division. The dead are burned, but the bodies of Gosáins are always buried. Bairágís are mendicants, usually living in celibacy, but often adopting a Bairágan, or sister, who is in reality a concubine. The bodies of Bairágís are either burned, buried, or cast into a river; but if the relatives be rich, or if the deceased has attracted disciples, the corpse is interred, and an Ákhára built over his grave. A Bairágí may marry, but it is deemed highly meritorious to lead a celibate life, avoiding all connection with women. On obtaining permission to marry he is known as a Sam-yogí, becoming enrolled in a caste, or community, called Ját Boistub, but generally nicknamed "Vántáṣi," a term more expressive than elegant.

Bengal is divided into circles, each circle having its own Gosáin, within whose jurisdiction no other Gosáin can legitimately act. The Gosáins of Nityánanda have always been more popular than their rivals, and claim the exclusive right of making disciples in the districts of Dacca, Báqirganj, Farrídpúr, and Jessore; but in each of these representatives of the three head centres may be found. The Nityánanda Gosáins were especially favoured by the Muhammadan governors, Jasárat Khán, the Nawáb of Dacca, when the English acquired the Ráj, granting a Sanad to Nanda Lál Gosáin, conferring on him land in Báqirganj for the maintenance of male and female mendicants. In 1783 the zamíndárs dispossessed the proprietors, but on appeal the Çadr 'Adálat ordered the restitution of the property, which is held by their descendants at the present day.

In the city of Dacca there are seven Nityánanda Gosáins, the chief, Madan Mohan Gosvámi, being eleventh in descent from the Prabhu, while the others are the offspring of children adopted by former Gozáins. As a natural result, there is much covert enmity and jealousy between each household. The chief Ákhára, or monastery, of these "Gentoo Bishops," as they were styled by Holwell, is called Rám Kanháí in Islámpúr; but in Farrídábád, a suburb of the city, and at Uthali, near Teota, in the Ja'farganj Thánah, are two celebrated Ákháras, at which other Gosáins reside.

The Gosáins are a comparatively pure stock, and fair specimens of the higher Bengali race. As a rule they are of a light brown, or wheaten, colour, tall and large-boned. Muscular they ought to be, but indolence and good living stamps them at an early age with a look of sensuality and listlessness, and they become large fat men, fond of sleep, their chief muscular exertion consisting in holding out the foot to be kissed by admiring followers. Their lives are passed in sensual pleasures, and the boundless influence they wield among thousands of the middle classes is, unhappily, not directed to their moral elevation. Satisfied with a blind and unquestioning adoration, they are quite content, if it lasts during their lifetime, to disregard the possibility of future agitation and revolution.

The Nityánanda and Advayánanda Gosáins differ in several respects. The former admit into their communion all ranks and conditions of men and women, from the Bráhman to the Chaṇḍál, from the Bráhmaní widow to the common prostitute; but the latter only admits Bráhmans and members of the clean Ṣúdra castes. The first maintain that any limitation is opposed to the teaching of Chaitanya, and at variance with the fact that the whispering of the Mantra in the ear of the most wicked and dissolute often leads to repentance and conversion.

The Nityánanda Gosáins have always been most popular with the lower Bengali castes, having acquired a commanding position among Vaishnavas. A "Panjah," or silver hand, is the badge of the family. At Khardah is still paraded one presented by a Nawáb of Bengal, and the Janmáshṭamí procession of the Tántís is preceded by a man carrying a "Panjah."

The Advayánanda Gosáins, as a matter of course, are highly esteemed by the upper classes, it being exceedingly rare for a Bráhman, or Baidyá, to enroll himself in the ranks of the other. They are numerous in Dacca, the most respected and learned being Dínabandhu of Bosés Bazár. These Gosáins are said to be more sincere, and less depraved, than the others, invariably refusing to receive any woman, and thus avoiding much scandal. Furthermore, they do not seek to increase the number of followers in the indiscriminate way the Nityánanda do, but welcome any penitent who approaches them, if he proves by his behaviour that he is really desirous of leading a new life.

Vaishnavas on entering the society pay a fee of twenty anas, sixteen of which go to the Gosáin, and four to the Faujdár. It is also asserted that the Advayánanda Gosáins pay a fee to the Nityánanda, on the grounds that only the latter can properly initiate disciples in Eastern Bengal.

No one but a Hindu can join the Vaishnava community, and as a rule no probation is required. Each member of a Vaishnava family must receive the Mantra, his water-vessels being impure until he does so, while it cannot rightly be given until the rite Karṇa-vedha, or ear-boring, has been performed. The strict Vaishnava never drinks water from the hands of a Ṣiv worshipper, even though he belong to the same caste.

In each important village of Bengal an Ákháṛa, belonging to the sect, exists, sanctifying, according to Hindu ideas, the place and protecting the inhabitants from all evil. Ákháṛas are often built by subscription, mendicants being invited to take posssesion and tend the idols of Madana-Mohana or Kṛishna, Rádha-Kṛishna, or Kṛishna-Balaráma, lodged in them. The two most famous images of the Bengali Vaishnavas are those of Vishnupúr in Bankúra, now in Calcutta, and the Gopi-náth of Agradvípa in Krishnaghar.

The religious duties (Sádhana) of the Gṛihi and Bairágí Vaisbnavas are sixty-four in number, the most important being the foot-kissing (Pada-áṣraya), of the Gosáin, and the Náma Kírtana, or invocation of the god's name.

At initiation the Vaishnava novice receives a Mála, or rosary, which is either hung round the neck or put into a cloth bag, having an opening for the thumb. The rosary consists of 108 beads, and it is incumbent on each individual to count his beads a certain number of times daily, while no true disciple will drink water, or touch food, until he has made a round of the rosary, muttering as he touches each bead, one or other of the names of Hari. The frequency with which the beads are counted is considered a test of sincerity, and many Vaishnavas spend the chief part of their lives repeating the names of Harí; while in the streets, in places of public amusement, and even during conversation, they may be observed dreamily, often unconsciously, renewing, with painful reiteration, the bead-counting, and the monotonous burden of their prayers. It is also considered a most meritorious act to teach a parrot, or "mainá," to speak nothing but Harí Rám.

Another important Sádhana is the San-Kírtana, which consists in reciting religious songs in honour of Kṛishna. Twice a day, in the forenoon, and at sunset, services are held in all Ákháṛas, when oblations are made to the idols. The favourite musical instruments are the Mṛidanga, an elongated drum, tapering towards the ends, and the Kartál, or brass cymbals. The eleventh day of the waxing moon in each month is a fast, no food being taken till sunset; while on the Ekádaṣi, the eleventh "tithi," or lunar day, following the Dashará, and for the ensuing thirty days, Vaishnavas are engaged in prayer and singing. Before dawn discordant music clangs from every shrine and Ákhāṛa in the country, and in the daytime bands of Mahants, pupils (chela), and scholars (avadhúta) perambulate the streets reciting—

"With earnestness repeat, Rádha, Kṛishna, Nitai, Chaitanya, Advaita, the three Prabhus."

The aforesaid duties are essential to salvation, and a strict observance of them will ensure endless felicity, even though the other sixty Sádhana are neglected.

The Gṛihi Vaishnavas, who live as other Hindus, comprise the majority of the sect. They celebrate with more or less pomp the Dol-játrá in Phálgun (March and April), the Rath-játrá in Ásharh (July and August), the Janmáṣhtamí, or birthday of Kṛishna, in Bhádra (August and September), and the Rás-játrá in Kártik (October and November).

The rich Súṇṛí bankers and merchants frequently erect Ákháṛas adjoining their houses, liberally endowing them, and providing food for swarms of hungry mendicants. Although the Vaishnava creed has attracted most of the lower classes of Bengal, it has, by recognising caste, entirely failed to elevate or guide them towards higher aspirations.

The Bairágí and Bairágan Vaishnavas are of evil repute, their ranks being recruited by those who have no relatives, by widows, by individuals too idle or depraved to lead a steady working life, and by prostitutes. Vaishnavi, or Boistubi according to the vulgar pronunciation, has come to mean a courtezan. A few undoubtedly join from sincere and worthy motives, but their numbers are too small to produce any appreciable effect on the behaviour of their comrades. The habits of these beggars are very unsettled. They wander from village to village, and from one Ákháṛa to another, fleecing the frugal and industrious peasantry on the plea of religion, and singing songs in praise of Harí beneath the village tree, or shrine. Mendicants of both sexes smoke Indian hemp (gánjha), and, although living as brothers and sisters, are notorious for licentiousness. There is every reason for suspecting that infanticide is common, as children are never seen. In the course of their wanderings they entice away unmarried girls, widows, and even married women, on the pretext of visiting Ṣrí Kshetra (Jagannáth), Brindában, or Benares, for which reason they are shunned by all respectable natives, who gladly give charity to be rid of them.

The following account of an annual religious gathering in

Bengal discloses the true character of these disreputable mendicants. Amid the ruins of ancient Gaur are large reservoirs of water, called Rúpa and Sanátan, after the two distinguished Muhammadans converted by Chaitanya, on the banks of which the "Rás Mela," or "Prema tala," *i.e.*, real love, festival is held in the month of June. Crowds of Bairágís and Bairágans resort to this fair from all parts of Bengal, the latter being seated in long rows with their faces covered. Should a Bairágí be in search of a companion, he pays the customary fee to the Faujdár, and a selection is made. He leads the female aside, raises her veil, and if satisfied takes her away, otherwise he takes her back to her place. In the latter case the Faujdár refuses to allow another choice, unless the twenty anas fee is again paid. It is a law with these licentious Bairágís that a man cannot put away the woman selected, even for adultery, until the next year's gathering comes round.

BÁYÁN-KAUPÍNA.

This sect of Vaishnavas has received this strange name from the members wearing the "Kaupína," or waist-cloth, fastened on the left (báyán) side instead of the right, as is the invariable custom with other Vaishnavas. The following story is told of its origin. A Guru in the act of initiating a disciple inadvertently tied the Kaupína on the left side, but seeing his mistake he was proceeding to rectify it, when the novice remonstrated by saying that the oversight must have been predestined by Harí, and refused to permit of any change. He accordingly went forth in disarray, and established the Báyán-Kaupína Vaishnavas.

There is only one Ákháṛá of this sect in Dacca, situated in Narsinghdee, a suburb of the city. The Mahant is a Ṣrotriyá Bráhman, only twenty years of age, who succeeded his father, a native of Northern Bengal. In Silhet there are many communities of the sect, and at Haibatnagar, in Mymensingh, there is also an establishment belonging to them.

The special object of worship of the Báyán-Kaupína Vaishnavas is Rádhá-Kṛishna, but they are never charged with the immoral practices usually attributed to sects worshipping this union of the male and female principles. The flesh of all manner of fish, or beast, every intoxicating substance, and Gánjha, are strictly forbidden, and only women of moral character are initiated, and allowed to reside in Ákháṛás. The members of the sect formerly ate with other Vaishnavas, but of late years this toleration, being abused, has been revoked. The

Mahant makes an annual visitation throughout his circle, instructing the laity and collecting the yearly subscriptions for the support of the Ákhárạ́.

KIṢORÍ-BHAJANA.

This, one of the many outgrowths of Vaishnavism, is properly designated Sáhuja, but in Eastern Bengal it is known as Kiṣorí-Bhajana—Kisorí being a maiden, and Bhajana the Sanskrit for adoration. In many respects the sect resembles the Rádhá-Vallabhís, and a tradition survives that it seceded from them. It is related that the Guru having tasted food on a fast, or "Ekádaṣí," day, observed by all Vaishnavas, gave a portion to his disciples, making them violate their vows, and obliging the other members who had not tasted to separate and form a dissenting body. It is more probable, however, that the society is the same as the Rádhá-Vallabhí, but acknowledging other masters. The founder of the sect in Dacca was one Kála Chand Vidyálankára, a poor Bráhman, who lived about ninety years ago. He served in his Guru's house, but having accidentally struck his mistress when pounding rice, he fled to Navadvíp, and became the pupil of Vanṣá Rám, a Spashṭa Dáyaka. The religious establishment created by him differed altogether from that of his Guru. A Spashṭa Dáyaka will not look upon a woman, nor accept food from her; while with the Kiṣorí-Bhajana, woman occupies the chief place, and is the principal object of worship.

This sect is peculiar in having no Udásí, or religious mendicants. There is a Guru, or Pradhán, as he is called, who initiates converts, and conducts all religious services. As among the Chakra worshippers of the Tantras, absolute secresy regarding the mysteries of the creed is preserved, although in the city of Dacca many hundreds of Hindus, especially women,[1] belong to it. The majority pertain to the low Súṇrí caste, but individuals of all ranks, from the Bráhman to the Chaṇḍál, are freely admitted, equality being enforced, and no distinctions permitted.

It is extremely difficult to find out the precise religious beliefs of this sect. It is stated that members always place a book, or an article of common use, in a conspicuous part of the house, and worship it as a symbol of their faith, in the hope of misleading the public and avoiding too particular inquiries.

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[1] Who generally shave their heads, leaving only a top-knot.

The following incomplete account has been obtained, and as far as it goes may be accepted as correct. At the initiation of a disciple a Mantra, consisting of the word "Hang-sha," is whispered into his ear, and is believed to possess a certain mystical meaning, the first syllable typifying the air breathed, the latter the air expired. An indecent scene, in which a naked woman sits on the knee of the neophyte, is then rehearsed, as a crucial test of his having mortified the flesh and its lusts, and of his having become a worthy candidate for admission.

The chief ceremony resembling the Rás Mandalis of the Mahárájas of Bombay, which have been styled "carnal love meetings," is celebrated in a suitable room where a long strip of white cloth is spread on the floor with plantain leaves laden with fish and rice, while flesh and spirits never appear.

The feast being over, songs in honour of Rádhá-Kṛishná are chanted with the effect of often causing extravagant and violent excitement, terminating in hysterical weeping and convulsions. The Pradhán then selects a woman, possibly the prettiest; the pair are dusted with sandal-wood powder, crowned with flowers, and the company make adoration to them as the personations of Rádhá and her lover Kṛishna. Each man present then decorates himself with garlands, perfect silence being observed, and is presumed to fall into a dreamy sensuous condition, with mind abstracted and absorbed in the contemplation of the semblance of Rádhá at his side.

Such is the degraded and immoral product of the teaching of Chaitanya! The secresy in which the sect flourishes, and the reticence maintained by its members, not only favour the worst suspicions, but explain the disgust with which all other classes of natives regard it. The Kiṣorí-Bhajana holds the same position among Vaishnava sects as the Chakra does among Ṣaiva, both being the fruit of religious ecstasy carried to its natural conclusion.

JAGAT-MOHANÍ.

This, perhaps the most excellent of all the Vaishnava sects, derives its name from the Sanskrit Jagat, the world, and Mohana, a title of Kṛishna, signifying the fascinator, or cynosure.

The founder, Jagat Mohan, appeared as a teacher at Mashulia, a village of Silhet, about two hundred years ago. He was worshipped as an incarnation of Vishnu, and it is believed that he never tasted of death. On his translation from this world his mantle descended in turn on Govinda Gosvámí, Ṣánta Gosvámí, and Rám Kṛishna Gosvámí, the greatest of them all, whose Samádhi, or tomb, is the principal object in the large Ákháṛá at Baithalang in Silhet, where the head-quarters of the sect are located. Of this Gosáin many wonderful stories are told. For instance, he obtained anything he desired by merely wishing for it, and his credulous followers believe that by prostrating themselves before his pattens (Khaṛáún), preserved at this shrine, their wishes will be fulfilled. Facing each Ákháṛá of this sect a mat hut stands, where visitors perform Bhajana, or adoration, every evening; while inside is a "Chauḍol," or cabinet, containing a pair of pattens. The Baithalang Ákháṛá is richly endowed, and often hundreds of pilgrims are fed at it in a single day.

This body is very numerous in Silhet, less so in Mymensingh, and in Dacca it is calculated that not more than fifty families belong to it. There is one Ákháṛá in the quarter of the city called Farídábád, and another at Tál-ṭolá in Bikrampúr.

It is asserted that throughout Bengal the society possesses three hundred and sixty Ákháṛás, each having a Mahant, or leader, and a Pújárí, or officiating priest. These offices may be filled by persons of any caste, there being a tradition that Rám Kṛishna Gosvámí was a fisherman. Women are not permitted to reside within an Ákháṛá, and should any immorality be proved against one of the brethren, he is admonished; should he repeat the offence he is summarily expelled.

In the Ákháṛás, Kírttan, or religious songs, in praise of Kṛishna, very rarely of Rádhá, are chaunted seven times a day, and twice at night.

As with other Vaishnava sects, there are two ranks, namely the Gṛihí and Vairágí, the former living at their homes, and working as other men; the latter wandering about the country as beggars. Women receive the Mantra, as well as the men; but not the Bhek. Hindus of all classes join the association, but Christians and Muhammadans are disqualified. The Mahants are more earnest, and more watchful over the welfare of their flocks than is usually the case, and every year make visitations throughout their dioceses. No fixed sum is levied from a novice, but if rich he is expected to contribute something to the Ákháṛá. In Silhet, moreover, it is customary to present a share of the first-fruits to the nearest shrine, and bequeath money for its support.

The Vairágí is forbidden to eat fish or flesh; to smoke Gánjha or tobacco; or to drink spirits.

After death corpses are usually cast into a river, never burned, and it is only when a dying Mahant expresses a wish to be buried, that a Samádhi is constructed. While in articulo the body is lowered into the grave, as it is thought lucky for him to die where he is to rest.

The bodies and faces of members of this sect are marked with twelve or more sectarial devices. Two parallel lines are drawn with sandal-wood paste from the crown of the head, or from the roots of the front hair, to the tip of the nose, where they meet and form a loop; a spot is put on the last rib on each side, at the top of the sternum, on each arm, and on the lobes of the ears. Their dress is noways peculiar. The fore part of the head is closely shaven, while the back, from which a long cue depends, is left untouched. Many also wear round the neck a double fold of red tape received at Jagannáth.

The residents of Ákháṛás are forbidden to beg, but thankfully accept any charity offered them. On no account can they absent themselves unless summoned to visit a sick, or penitent, disciple.

Very little can be ascertained regarding the tenets of the Jagat Mohaní Vaishnanas, but even their enemies admit that their lives are exemplary and moral. The Mahant at Dacca is a quiet, unassuming youth, with no hypocritical pretensions to sanctity, as is too often the case with Hindu cenobites.

SPASHṬA DÁYAKA.

This sect was founded by Rúp Kabíráj, the disciple of Kṛishna Chandra Chakravarttí of Saidábád, the pupil of Mákandah Dás, a successor of Chaitanya. It is set forth that Kṛishna Chandra sojourned at Brindában acquiring great renown as a holy teacher, and that on leaving he delivered to Rúp Kabíraj the charge of his flock, upon whom a great scandal had fallen owing to the crowds of women residing in the Ákháṛás with the disciples. Rúp Kabíráj, therefore, determined on casting out all those who, by their licentious behaviour, had brought disgrace on the community; but he encountered serious opposition. Worn out, and irritated by this factious spirit, he one day threw the leavings of his food into the dishes of his opponents, and thereby cast a stain on them. He then intimated that for the future no member of the society should eat food cooked by a woman.

Another story is sometimes told of its foundation. The wife of Rúp Kabíráj was in the habit of distributing food to the disciples, but some refused to accept it because she wore a shell bracelet, the badge of low birth. The husband pointed out that his wife, a Ṭhákuráni, could lawfully mete out the Prasáda without causing disgrace; but the disciples, still sceptical, seceded, and established the order of Spashṭa Dáyaka.[1]

This sect has never flourished in Eastern Bengal, but it has an establishment in the city of Dacca, known as the Ináyatganj Ákháṛá, founded by Vanṣa Rám Gosáin. Another monastery exists at Simalía, fourteen miles north of the city; a third at Dalál Bázár in Noakhally; while in Silhet many Ákháṛás are supported.

A writer in the Calcutta Review, with whom Dr. Hunter agrees, has put forth statements apt to mislead regarding the peculiar doctrines of this body. These authorities state that its characteristic features are the repudiation of the servile veneration paid to the Guru, and a mystical association of the male and female devotees. On the contrary, at Dacca, the Guru does receive special veneration, and the spirit of a former Gosáin Pancha Rám is still invoked, while in the Ináyatganj Ákháṛá the mother of the Guru resides, although her son cannot receive food from her hands, and no other woman is allowed to remain within its walls. Further, it cannot be denied that Rádhá Kṛishna is the principal object of worship. The Mantra is bestowed on women, the Bhek never. Finally, celibacy is professed by all, and any glaring immorality entails expulsion.

All castes, including Chaṇḍáls, are enrolled in the sect, but a preference is shown for the pure Súdras.

The distinctive sectarial mark is a daub of ochre (Gopí-chandan) on the nose, with two narrow lines drawn upwards to the roots of the hair. The temples, arms, chest, and shoulders are stamped with the sacred names of Harí.

The Spashṭa Dáyaka accept alms from any Hindus, and even from Muhammadans, but never from Chamárs, or prostitutes. The Vaishnava Vairágí is forbidden to eat with him, and he declines to eat with the Vairágí. He is further prohibited from touching flesh or fish, and from eating with any one not a member of his association.

The Bhek is conferred on married men, even though continuing to lead a secular life. The Vairágí Spashṭa Dáyaka leads the same irregular vagabond existence as the Vairágí Vaishnava, making pilgrimages to Ṣrí Brindában, and roaming from one shrine to another, subsisting on the charity of the villagers. It is forbidden for him to receive money at marriages and festivals; but on all other occasions he is at liberty to accept it.

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[1] Sanskrit Spashṭa, true, Dáyaka, giving, or given.

Their dead are usually interred, and the grave (Samádhi) of those who have died leaving disciples is, as with all Vaishnavas, held in especial veneration, an Ákhárá being built over it. Every cenobite desires to be buried, and this feeling is one of the most potent means of spreading the doctrines of the sect, as each one strives to form a company, and to become the founder of an Ákhárá, where his name will be preserved, and his memory revered.

A corpse is buried in a sitting posture, as among the mendicant Jogís. A cloth (námá-bolí), stamped with the name Harí, is wrapped round the head; the Kaupína, like that received at initiation, round the body; while the arms are folded across the chest, a necklace hung around the neck, and a cocoa-nut shell (Karanka), a wallet, and a staff (daṇḍá) placed by the side. If the deceased were a man of unusual sanctity, religious rites would be daily performed at his tomb, and his spirit invoked on all occasions of affliction and misfortune.

The Ákhárá in Dacca is richly endowed, possessing "debottar" lands yielding a revenue of four hundred and fifty rupees a year, which is supplemented by collections made by the Vairágís.

KAVÍ-INDRA PARIVÁRA.

This title is assumed by a small sect of Vaishnavas claiming to be the Parivára, or attendants, of Vishnu Dás Kaví-Indra, one of the original sixty-four Mahants who preached the doctrines of Chaitanya after his decease. Vishnu Dás was a Ṣúdra, and the Mahants have since his day been Ṣúdras. As the story goes, Vishnu Dás was a special favourite of Chaitanya, evincing his humility and faith by daily partaking of the leavings of the Maháprabhu's meal. Unfortunately, one day he found no orts, but looking into the spittoon he detected a grain of rice, tinged with blood, which had been ejected by Chaitanya when rinsing his mouth. Vishnu Dás swallowed it, but his proceeding did not escape the watchful eye of an enemy. The Maháprabhu was appealed to, and decided that any disciple tasting the blood of his Guru must be excommunicated. Chaitanya was grieved at the loss of his devoted follower, but having once given his decision it was irrevocable, so Vishnu Dás went forth to organise a dissenting society of his own.

The doctrines of this sect are almost identical with those of the Chaitanya Vaishnavas, and the only differences in the internal economy are, that the Mahant, or religious head, discharges the duties of an elective, not of a hereditary, office, and that he is always a Ṣúdra.

The only Ákhára of the sect in the Dacca district is situated at Sánara, twenty miles north of the city; and it is calculated that the society consists of not more than forty families. Many, however, are rich Súnrí bankers, and merchants, who contribute liberally to its maintenance. This sect is peculiar in having no Udásí, or Vairágí grade, the members from the Mahant downwards being Grihí, or married men. All castes are freely admitted into its ranks, and it is said that even Ṣrotriyá Bráhmans are occasionally enrolled.

BÁOLA.

In Bengal various disreputable mendicant orders exist, comprehended under the generic term Báola, or Váyula, the Sanskrit for crazed, but used in the same sense as the Persian "diwánah," inspired. These orders are schismatics from the main Vaishnava body, and having been established by low caste enthusiasts chiefly attract the fisher and peasant classes.

They are distinguished as Nitya, Chaitanya, and Harí Dás Báolas, after the great Vaishnava doctors. The ordinary treatises, such as the Chaitanya-Charitámrita and the Krishna Tantra, are followed as the authoritative guides of their orders.

Báolas make pilgrimages to all the shrines deemed sacred by the genuine Vaishnava, and look upon the Gosáins as their spiritual leaders. Flesh and spirits are forbidden, but fish is considered lawful food, and Gánjha is smoked to excess. No Báola dare shave, or cut his hair, and personal uncleanliness is commended as a religious virtue. They assume greater social tolerance than Vaishnavas generally, and while the Vairágí only eats with Vairágís sprung from his own caste, the Báola fraternizes with all Báolas, even with those of the lowest and most despised castes. Members of the order affirm that in the Dacca district alone twenty Báola Ákhárás exist, but the only recognized one in the neighbourhood of the city is in a village called Mírer Bágh.

The favourite object of worship with all Báolas is Krishna as a child, or Láḍú-Gopál; but in most Ákhárás the Charaṇa, or pattens, of the founder are also honoured.

At the initiation of a disciple loathsome substances are eaten, and actions indescribably filthy are committed, as tests of worthiness. Celibacy and morality are inculcated, but never practised, and nowadays there is no sect so despised for its shameless profligacy as the Báola. Young women are encouraged to join the body on the pretence of living as sisters and helpmates in the Ákhāṛá; but the majority of the females in Ákhāṛás are prostitutes. A Báola gives a feast to the Mahant, and pays a fee of twenty anas when he wishes to possess a helpmate. Girls with good voices are usually selected, as the revenue of the community is derived from playing on the Gopí-jantra and Sarangí to the villagers, and from singing religious hymns.

Mahants are always buried in the same position as Jogís, and over the grave, or Samádhi, an Ákhāṛá is built by his disciples. The bodies of the laity are thrown into a river, unless the individual has been distinguished for sanctity, or for the number of his adherents.

The various Báola divisions only differ from each other in certain ceremonial observances and social usages.

The low estimation in which all Báloas are held by the Hindus, and the odium, shared by all, are explained in the following account of the Sudarám Báolas.

About 1825 Sudarám, a Chaṇḍál peasant of Birkrampúr, received "*bhek*" from a Vairáganí, named Tokání, a member of the Nyaḍa-Nyaḍí society, and thereupon organised a new sect, making Jagannáth Dás, a Kaibartta, his pupil. Sudarám resided at 'Abdullahpúr in Bikrampúr, and there the first Ákhāṛá was constructed. Sudarám and Tokání were quite illiterate, but this was no drawback in the eyes of the simple villagers, who joined the new society in considerable numbers. The Samádhi of Tokání Máya is at 'Abdullahpúr, where Gaur Dás, the Chaṇḍál Mahant, resides; but that of Sudarám is at Sirájábád on the river Padma. A third Ákhāṛá has been lately established at Narsinghdih, north of Old Sunnárgáon.

The doctrines taught by Sudarám were, the existence of one God, Harí, and the perfection of the Mahápraبhu Nityánanda. Further, it was revealed to him that Víra Bhadra, a successor of Nityánánda, observed the Ṣákta ritual; consequently the abominable impurities of the Chakra worship were engrafted upon the Vaishnava creed. Adding whatever was likely to bind his credulous followers, and prevent separation, he further adopted the disgusting practises of the Aghorapanthís.

In the Ákhāṛá at 'Abdullahpúr an image of Kṛishna as a child, called Bála Gopála, Gopála-na-bálaka, or Láḍu-Gopála, a Ṣíva-linga, and a wooden Vishnupada, are worshipped. A most sacred relic is a staff, four feet in length, with an iron hand at the top, said to be the fac-simile of one borne by Nityánand, and decorated with strings of shells, stone beads, and flowers. Although Harí is the chief object of worship, Sudarám and his "Charaṇ" share in the adoration of the society, who also sing hymns in honour of Suda-Tokání, the two founders, and make offerings of rice, "Kái," starch, and native spirits.

About two hundred and fifty families, chiefly Kaibarttas and Chaṇḍáls, have already joined this dissolute body; but all classes, even Muhammadans, may do so. It has gained a certain position among the uneducated masses, and villagers who, though disagreeing with its principles, often present offerings in fulfilment of vows.

At the initiation of a disciple a wooden huqqá of a peculiar elongated form is given, as well as a necklace of a hundred and eight beads, a staff, a wallet, a piece of cloth, called "Uran-Vasana," dyed of a reddish colour with Gerú, or ochre, and a hempen cord to fasten the Kaupína, or waist cloth. The distinctive badge of the sect, however, is a pair of brass bracelets (Kaṛá) of singular shape. At the thinner end elephants' heads are roughly designed, while the trunks unite to form the circle. The wooden beads of the common Hindu necklace have been discarded, and the party-coloured glass heads of the Muhammadan Faqírs adopted. Twenty anas is paid to the person giving the Mantra; but the Mahant claims the same amount from each novice.

Women receive Bhek, and reside with the Sádhus, or mendicants, as wives. This is a late innovation, for Sudarám restricted the association of men and women to a platonic sympathy like that of brothers and sisters. A few professing celibates, however, are to be found, as well as some who have had the "Mála" ceremony of regular marriage performed, but the large majority live shamelessly.

The Sudarám Báola is a dirty and unsavoury ascetic, seldom bathing, except when ill, and fulfilling all requirements by smearing his face and body daily with mustard oil. He drinks spirits to excess, and is generally stupefied with Indian hemp. They, however, pride themselves on shaving the beard, and on not allowing it to grow untrimmed like other Báolas. The "Mirdang" and "Kartál" are the favourite musical instruments, but when attending as professional musicians at the Trínath Mela, which they often do, the "belá," and "Sárangí," varieties of the violin are preferred.

These Báolas assume many virtues. The Mahant is very humble, styling himself "Jháṛú," or sweeper, Mahant, and pretending to have no interest in the dissemination of his religious belief among the villagers. Everybody who comes to the Ákhára, asking for admission, is welcomed, and no proof of sincerity is required. Pilgrimages being supererogatory are not favoured, as knowledge of the world is thought likely to give rise to doubts and unbelief.

In the villages of the interior the Sudarám Báolas bear the worst reputation for enticing away girls from their homes, and encouraging lovers to elope, and join their society. It is a common occurrence to meet these unclean mendicants on a country road walking unencumbered, while a young, and often comely girl, carrying all their property, lags behind, with a melancholy expression of face, an index of the humiliation she feels. Widows, it is not to be wondered at, often join the Báolas, as they cannot receive greater indignities than at home.

DARWESH-FAQÍR.

This compound Arabic-Persian name has been adopted by one of the latest and most corrupt offshoots from the Vaishnava stem, tracing its origin to Rúpa and Sanátan, two of the six Gosáins after Chaitanya, who, if not Muhammadans themselves, were servants of a Muhammadan king. The following history and particulars were gleaned at visits paid to the two chief Ákhárás in 1874.

The founder of the sect, Udáya Chánd, a Karmakár, died about 1850, leaving three Ṣiṣu, or pupils, namely, his daughter and immediate successor, popularly called the "Mahárání," one Autal Chánd, a Káyath, and Bípan Chánd, a Sáha. Autal Chánd dying left two disciples, Ṣánta Chánd, a Saha, and Prem Chánd, a Telí. The Mahárání died suddenly in November, 1874, and the succession was disputed by Bípan Chánd and Ṣánta Chánd.

The Ákhárá to which these parties belonged, at Jháú Kandhí, on the left bank of the river Padma, is a remarkably clean and tidy place, consisting of four separate thatched houses with raised mud floors. In the centre of the square is a magnificent Bakul tree (*Mimusops Elengi*), while bounding the enclosure is a plantation of mangoe trees and Betle palms. Three houses serve for the accommodation of the resident Udásís, five or six in number, while the fourth is a Baiṭhak-Khána where visitors are entertained. In one corner are the graves of Udáya Chánd and his daughter, the former within a brick building with only one entrance, the latter beneath a square thatched shed. Both graves are of the same pattern, namely, a rectangular earthern mound, from the centre of which a round flat knob rises, and on the earlier one two eyes have been painted. Fresh flowers, chiefly marigolds and convolvuluses, are daily strewn over them, while in front a clean white cloth is spread on which a tumbler of water, a plate with sections of an orange, and a huqqá primed with tobacco are placed. A strong, and unmistakable, odour of spirits issued from the Mahárání's resting place on this occasion.

At Kálakopa, on the Hilsámárí river, an Ákháṛá was built over the Samádhi, or grave, of one Baláí Chánd, a Gop Goála, and a distinguished member of the order. His favourite disciple, a Sáha woman, now presides over it, and is everywhere known as the "Khepárání," or mad queen, to distinguish her from the "Mahárání" of Jháú-Kandhí. She is now about forty years of age, and usually dresses in oily and very unsavoury garments. She never leaves the Ákháṛá, but receives food and other necessaries from the Karmakárs and Sáhas of the neighbourhood, although they do not belong to her sect. Anybody can enter the shrine, as no regular service is held there, but only prayers recited, and oblations made whenever domestic troubles happen. The Khepárání has no Ṣishya, or pupil, as she deems herself unworthy of having one.

The Darwesh-Faqírs worship Kṛishna, distinguishing their creed by the term "Brahma-dharma." Their religious books, such as the Chaitanya-Charitámṛita, are the ordinary Vaishnava ones, but few can read, still less understand them. At the initiation of a disciple the Mahant receives presents, and delivers to the novice a "Kaupína," a Khirqá, or gown reaching to the ankles, and a Kishtí, or cocoa-nut shell, which serves the same purpose as the scrip, or wallet, of European beggars. Like the Aghorapanthís, he must taste the most disgusting substances to prove his indifference and contempt for the prejudices of humanity. The Udásís never shave or cut the hair, and seldom bathe with water, but use instead mustard oil, with which they saturate their garments. The sect professes to lead celibate lives, but there is in each Ákháṛá at least one woman ostensibly engaged in sweeping the enclosure and cooking the meals of the Udásís. The wearing of necklaces and bracelets like other Vaishnava sects is forbidden, but the members feign greater liberality, and are glad to eat with every caste, and even with Mussulmáns.

Intoxication is a very venial offence, and spirits are not only openly drunk, but also form the principal accessory of their worship. A bottle of brandy is a more welcome present than money, and whenever the Mahárání or Khepáráni makes a tour through the country, village women of all castes flock to the boats with offerings of spirits, in hopes that through the intercession of these personages every desire will be attained. After being blessed, the village matrons, it is said, drink a little, and in June, 1873, the excise officers accounted for a sudden reduction in the consumption of spirits to the illness of the Mahárání.

This sect always apes humility, repudiating the title Váyula a name of Nityánanda, but claiming to be the most austere of all Vaishnava societies, and professing to reject those who have not mortified the seven lusts of the flesh. Animal life is never taken, and it is deemed sinful to break off branches, or even leaves, from trees. A singular form of obeisance is made before the Samádhis, and on the receipt of a present. The individual kneels, touches the ground with his forehead, and rising up daubs his chest and face with dust.

Though heartily despised by Hindus generally, for their filthy and dissipated habits, the Ákhạrá of Jháú-Kandhí stands on Brahmottara lands, bequeathed to the founder, and low caste Bráhmans visit the Baiṭhak-Khána and smoke dry huqqás with the Udásís.

This sect owns its origin to the egotism of some low caste Bengali, ambitious of emulating the prosperous Vaishnava communities, and of founding a society without any mystical beliefs, which would be acceptable to credulous persons. Owing to that spirit of toleration, so characteristic of the Hindus, the seed sown took root, and still vegetates. As the characters and influence of the leaders are estimated by the number of disciples, there is no lack of energy in spreading the doctrines of the sect. It will, therefore, in every probability, increase in numbers and importance until some equally debased association arises and displaces it.

ṢAIVAS.

The Ṣaiva fraternities have never gained popularity in Eastern Bengal. Their conventual establishments are few, and would have disappeared long ago but for the charitable endowments of former ages. The two principal sects are the Kánpháta Jogís and the Brahmáchárí. The former possess an Ákhạrá founded above a century ago, the latter one as old as the seventeenth century. The Ṣaiva cenobites, or mendicants, are notorious for their licentious lives and dissipated habits, but notwithstanding the scandal they cause, their Ákháṛás are on festival days thronged by crowds of devotees, chiefly women.

1. KÁNPHÁTA JOGÍS.

The comparatively modern sect of Kánphátá Jogís, founded by the great Ṣaiva doctor Gorakhnáth, possesses an Ákháṛá at Mánikganj, endowed by the pious Mahárání Bhavání of Nátor about A.D. 1750. The land and shrine having been swept away by the river Dhulleṣwari, a new building was erected inland, but has never flourished on its new site.

The history of the shrine is, that Harí Ṣrí, an Udásí, and Kánu Ṣrí, a Gṛihí Sannyásí, came from Benares, and obtained from the Mahárání a grant of land at Mánikganj to found an Ákháṛá. The first Mahant, Harí Ṣrí, was succeeded by a son of Kánu, and it has ever since been the rule to elect a Mahant alternately from these families.

Kánpháta Jogís are not necessarily Bráhmans, but the Mahants usually belong to some Hindustání Bráhmanical tribe. At the initiatory rite the Udásí receives a bamboo whistle three inches long, called Sinha-náth, which is attached to a cord, and used at the beginning of all religious ceremonies, and a rosary consisting of fifty Rudráksha beads, which must be told at least twice daily. The distinctive badge of the sect, however, are the large triangular blue glass or silver earrings adopted after initiation, and from which they derive their singular name of "torn-ears." The Udásís bestow the Mantra on all castes, but no one can wear the whistle or earrings unless he becomes an Udásí. The Kánpháta Jogís claim as their perquisite the Sánṛ, or bull, branded with the sacred trident at Ṣráddhas, and at Mánikganj this claim is admitted.

The Gṛihí Sannyásís, again, as with Vaishnavas, are married men, who, although permitted to wear the ochre-dyed mendicant garb, are generally peasants dressed like their neighbours. It is this class of Jogís, remarkable for their large filigree earrings, who during the cold season wander about Bengal as snake-charmers. They are usually cultivating Goálas from the Doáb, who leave their families at home during the annual tour in Bengal.

The principal festival of this sect ís the Ṣív-chaturdaṣí, or fourteenth day of the waxing moon of Phálgun (Feb.-March), when a great commercial fair is held near the Ákháṛá. Although the traders and hucksters still resort to it from all parts of

Bengal, the Udásís complain that yearly fewer pay their devotions at the shrine, and, what is of greater importance in their eyes, contribute less than formerly to its support. In only one respect has the reputation of the shrine been preserved, and the credulous still talk of the wonderful cures performed by the Mahant.

By blowing a Mantra over a cup of water, the Mahant cures one class of disease; by mixing the ashes of his Gánjha pipe in water the ordinary diseases are got rid of; and by making an amulet of the withered flowers which have stood in the sanctuary of the idol, a certain preservative against a third class of ailments is provided. Should the sick person be able to visit the Ṣiválí, or temple, in person, he is made to crawl on his belly to the sanctuary, and there lick the dust of the floor, and smear his face with it.

The Kánpháta Jogís are Ṣakta worshippers, consuming enormous quantities of spirits at all religious rites, and in the intervals stupefying themselves with Indian hemp. The drinking vessel is the skull of a Chaṇḍál, which is supported on the points of the thumb, forefinger, and little finger of the right hand, while spirits are quaffed from it. An Udásí can drink from the skull with all castes, without it only with Bráhmans; but the offer of a bottle of brandy overcomes all scruples, and it is incredible the impunity with which a toper drinks off the whole undiluted.

Although confirmed drunkards, the common people excuse their delinquencies, and are satisfied that they must be holy men because they live in an Ákhára, wear the mendicant dress, and affect indifference to worldly feelings and interests.[1]

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2. BRAHMÁCHÁRÍ.

This is a term applied to a mendicant who professes to have prolonged the period of studentship, and to observe through life the practice of study, poverty, and continence; but in Bengal it signifies a Ṣaiva ascetic. Under this name are usually included four classes, the Ṣuddhácharí, Brahmáchárí, Paṣuáchárí, and Dvidháchárí, which are alike in admitting only Bráhmans into their ranks.

The Ṣuddha, or stainless Áchárí, is a celibate, who lives on Atapa rice, milk, and vegetables, and is obliged to use Ghí in cooking instead of oil. Tobacco is allowed, and sweetmeats if prepared by an ascetic, but only one cooking pot can be used for preparing a meal. He wears the sacred cord, and the hair is left uncut and unkempt. The sectarial mark, or Tilaka, is a perpendicular streak made with dark clay from the Ganges.

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[1] For further particulars of the sect consult Wilson's "Religious Sects of the Hindus," i, 213, and "J. R. A. S.," vol. v, 268.

The four classes are distinguished from other orders by garments, stained of red ochre colour, called Gairiká (Geru) Vasana, or Bhagavan Vastra. The principal shrine of the Ṣuddhácháris is in Nadiyá, at Bela-Pokharia, on the Hughli.

The Brahmáchárí often reside in Ákháṛás without any pretensions to sanctity, eating flesh, drinking spirits and Bháng, and leading a life of sensuality without any fear of losing their hold on the consciences of the credulous multitude.

The Paṣuáchárí correspond with the Gṛihí Vaishnavas living secular lives, and only distinguished from other villagers by their unshaven chins and ochre-dyed clothes. The Dvidháchárí is the same as the Vánaprastha, who leaves his home, assuming the garb of a hermit, as soon as his wife bears a son.

All Ṣaiva mendicants regard Ṣankaráchárya, who lived in the eighth or ninth century, as their founder. His four disciples, "prabhus" they are usually called, Padmapáda, Hastámalaka, Sureṣvara, and Troṭaka, settled on different sides of India, at Jagannáth, Haridvara, Dváraká, and Rámeṣvara, which are still visited by all Ṣaiva pilgrims. The "prabhus" left ten disciples, after whom the ten orders of Ṣaiva ascetics (Dasṇámí) are named. Of these the Girí, or Gír, is the only one found in Eastern Bengal.

In the centre of the Ramṇá, or park of Dacca, rises the pyramidal spire of a famous Ákháṛá, founded by Uttama Gír, a renowned saint, who could even transmute metals. When the Muhammadans first came to Dacca the Nawáb built a summer house in this park, but his rest was disturbed by the constant blowing of chank shells. A peremptory order was issued to stop the unseasonable noise; but the same night the Nawáb was taken ill, and did not recover until the ascetics had been granted full permission to perform their religious ceremonies according to custom. In acknowledgment of his wonderful recovery, the Nawáb gave the garden house to the Ṣaiva mendicants, who built on the site an Ákháṛá, called the Prakása Datta, or Káth-ghar, long celebrated for its footprint of Ṣankaráchárya. This temple was pillaged by the Nágas, or Sannyasís, in 1763, and has since been gradually falling into ruins.

The existing Ákháṛá was built in place of the two older ones, and is popularly known as Harí Charan Gírs, a famous superior of former days. The temple is richly endowed, and is liberally supported by the inhabitants of Dacca. Mahárájas of Kochh Bihár and Tipperah, and Rájas of Chandradvíp, have at different times given grants of lands for its maintenance, but most of these have been resumed. Several branch temples have been established around Dacca in connection with this Ákhára, which add considerable funds to the annual income, while one-sixth of the gross receipts of the Dhákeṣvarí shrine are paid to the Mahant. The temples at Ṣítákhund in Chittagong have, within the last few years, been handed over to his care, and the post of head of the infamous Tára Kesvara temple in Hughlí was unsuccessfully claimed by the present Mahant. The Gosáin of the Dacca Ákhára is Kálí Gír, a Gauṛ Brahman, well known in every court and jail of Eastern Bengal. The high-sounding titles with which he begins every petition are Paramánanda Girí, Paramhansa, Paribrajuk, Ṣrí Prakáṣa, Kálí Charan Gir, Gosvámi, Mahant. Although his life is notoriously unsaintly, crowds of women resort to the Ákhára, especially on festival days, and worship him with the same extravagant devotion as the Vaishnava does his Gosáin. In the sanctuary of this temple are two large idols of Kálí and Kṛishna, made of the eight metals (ashṭa-dhátu), regarded by the Hindus with superstitious fears, one the gift of a Mahárájah of Kochh Bihár, the other of a ruler of Tipperah.

All Brahmácháris worship Ṣiv and Kálí, and their religious observances are those prescribed in the Sáma Veda and the Tantras, often including the impure practices attending the Ṣaktí ritual. Bloody sacrifices, libations of ghí and spirits, as well as offerings of fruits and flowers, are presented to the deity.

A Brahmáchárí, after spending ten years of devotion in an Ákhára, can return home, burn his sacred thread, and swallow the ashes, after which he may assume the garb of a Daṇḍi. If during another period of ten years he has complied with all the requirements of the grade, he becomes a Paramhansa, and must remain seated for twelve years in one position without asking charity, or accepting viands, but those voluntarily offered.

Surviving this prolonged penance, which is seldom tried, and scarcely ever accomplished, the devotee assumes the title of Mahá Paramhansa, becoming a part of the divine spirit. It is remarkable how similar these different grades of holiness are to the various stages of Çufí abstraction. The yearning desire for a closer communion with God is characteristic of both, and their common goal is complete absorption into the divine essence.

Members of Hindustání Ṣaiva sects are occasionally met with in Dacca on their way to some holy place, but they very rarely settle, or prolong their stay.

VARIOUS SECTS.

In addition to the Vaishnava and Ṣaiva sects, four others are met with in Eastern Bengal. The Ṣrí-Náráyana calls itself deist, but the great annual gathering is for the most part a scene of intemperance and vice. The members chiefly belong to low castes, who regard the drinking of spirits and the smoking of Gánjha as the greatest enjoyments in life.

The Nának Sháhí and Suthrá Sháhí sects, transplanted from the Punjáb, have never become acclimatized in Bengal. They have no root in the affections of the people, and are gradually perishing for want of support.

The Tri-náth Pújah, a modern excrescence peculiar to Eastern Bengal, has attracted great numbers of the most credulous and foolish of the people. The intoxication produced by Indian hemp is considered to be the illumination of the Spirit, and essential to the proper performance of their religious duties. The evil effects of this debasing worship are obvious, but up to 1875 it had spread with wonderful rapidity throughout Eastern Bengal, although no respectable Ṣúdra had openly enrolled himself in its ranks.

ṢRÍ-NÁRÁYANA, ṢIVA NÁRÁYANA.

This unitarian body in Eastern Bengal styles itself Ṣrí-náráyana, the name of God, and repudiates that of Ṣiva-náráyaná, the name of the founder.

The Dacca Mahant alleges that the peculiar doctrines of his congregation have prevailed for eleven hundred and forty-five years; and that their Grantha, or book, was unintelligible until Sítala, an inspired Sannyásí, translated it in compliance with a divine command. The translation, consisting of several works in the Devanágarí character, is the undoubted composition of the Rájput Ṣivanáráyaná of Ghazípúr, who wrote it about A.D. 1735.[1]

The most important of these works are the Guru-nyása, and Ṣánta-vilása. The former, compiled from the Puráṇas, gives an account of the ten Avatárs of Vishnu, or Náráyana, and is subdivided into fourteen chapters, of which the first six treat of the author, of faith, of the punishment of sinners, of virtue, of a future state, and of discipline. The latter is a treatise on moral sentiments. The opening lines are, "The love of God, and His knowledge, is the only true understanding."

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[1] Wilson's "Religious Sects of the Hindus," i, 358. The 1145 years was at first 1145 of the Bengali era, corresponding to A.D. 1738. Buchanan, ii, 137.

The Ṣrí-náráyanas profess the worship of one God, of whom no attributes are predicated. They pay no regard to any objects of Hindu or Muhammedan veneration, and are more strict unitarians than either the Sádhs, or Satnámís. Polygamy is prohibited, and sobriety, virtue, and charity inculcated. They strive to be tolerant, and not to wound the feelings of any sect by openly scoffing at their religious ceremonies. Finally, they admit all classes and races within the pale, and even half castes, or Eurasians, are occasionally enrolled. In Dacca the large majority of the Ṣrí-náráyanas are Dosáds, Dhobís, Chamárs, and other equally low castes.

As with most Hindu sects there are three grades, the Mahant, the holymen, called Sants,[1] and the laity.

The Mahant, or head of the Dacca congregation, a Patit Hindustání Bráhman, asserts that when a boy he accompanied Rám Mohan Rái to England. He initiates disciples by whispering a "mantra" into their ear, and presenting them with a parwánah, or certificate of membership.

The Sants are numerous, but as it is not necessary to relinquish worldly occupations, a person working at any trade or profession may become one, on paying a fee of thirty rupees, and on giving presents of muslin to the Mahant, and a feast to all Sants attending.

Sants are objects of reverence, and whenever one dies in a strange place, the Sants on the spot subscribe and bury him. The funeral procession is impressive, but very noisy. The corpse wrapped in a sheet with a roll of cloth wound round the head is deposited on a covered litter. Red flags flutter from the four corners, and a white cloth acts as a pall. With discordant music, and loud singing, the body is carried to the grave, dug in some waste place, where it is laid flat, not sitting as with the Jogís. The bodies of the lay brethren, on the other hand, are always burned.

The chief festival of the Ṣrí-náráyanas is held on the Ṣrí-panchamí and following day, in Magh (Jan.-Feb.). The Sants, along with representatives of many of the low Hindustání castes, resort to a thatched house, called the Dhámghar, having one large room with verandahs on all sides. At one end is a raised earthen platform on which the open Grantha, garlanded with flowers, is laid, and before this each disciple makes obeisance as he enters. The congregation squats all round the room, the women in one corner, listening to a few musicians chanting religious hymns, and smoking tobacco and gánjha, indifferent to the heat, smoke, and stench of the crowded room. The Mahant, escorted by the Sants carrying their parwánas, enters about 1 a.m., when the service begins. It is of the simplest form. The Mahant, after reading a few sentences in Nágarí, unintelligible to most of his hearers, receives offerings of money and fruit. The congregation then disperses, but the majority seat themselves in the verandahs and drink spirits. If the physical endurance of the worshippers be not exhausted, similar services are held for several successive nights, but the ordinary one only lasts two nights.

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[1] From Sanskrit Ṣánta, calmed, free from passions.

It is sad to think that a religious body, established as a protest against idolatry and the polytheism of the masses, should have so rapidly and so utterly failed to preserve its original standard; but it has only followed in the same downward path all the reformed Vaishnava and Ṣaiva sects. The Ṣrí-náráyan creed, however, has encountered peculiar difficulties, against which it has succumbed. The lower Hindu castes, ever willing to repudiate Bráhmanical interference, and assert spiritual independence, have always been notorious for profligacy and intemperate habits. Intoxication is with them an irresistible passion, and no threats or corrections have the slightest effect in weaning them from the vice. Faithful servants, kind parents, and affectionate husbands, they have no conception of a moral religion; and their untutored minds can neither understand nor comply with a faith inculcating morality and the mortification of all worldly lusts and passions.

SUTHRÁ-SHÁHÍS.

This is one of the seven subdivisions of the Nának Sháhí faith, and it is a remarkable thing to find it existing in a remote town like Dacca. There is only one Ákháṛá belonging to the body in Chúhṛá Bazár, where formerly many cenobites dwelt, but now it is occupied by a solitary Mahant. The sect is a very disreputable one, the members being usually drunkards, or Gánjha smokers. The Mahant supports this character admirably, wandering about on the look out for rich men's houses, before which he commences howling Hindustání songs in praise of Nának, and beating time with two pieces of wood. At weddings and other domestic rejoicings he appears uninvited, and by his importunity and shamelessness generally carries off alms in some shape.

The chief objects of worship with this society are Nának Sháh, and the Grantha, or sacred book of the Sikhs, to which on certain occasions flowers and other articles are offered, as is also done by the Nának Sháhís. Suthrá Shahís are often Bráhmans, who do not discard the sacred cord on becoming Udásís. They eat with Bráhmans of their own tribe, but not with all grades of Sikhs. No Sikh, on the other hand, will refuse to partake of "Prasád," or consecrated food, from them. The Suthrá Shahís observe all the great Hindu festivals, and pay special adoration to the "Sálagrám."

NÁNAK-SHÁHÍ.

During the sixteenth century several religious reformers appeared in India, but few were so successful as Nának Sháh. He proclaimed that there was One all-powerful and invisible, to whom men ought to pray; that the only knowledge of any value was the knowledge of God; and that salvation was free to every one who performed good actions and led a virtuous life. These doctrines were denounced, his disciples persecuted, and when Nának died, A.D. 1539, he left a few zealous and devoted followers to propagate his faith. In spite of the oppression and intolerance of the bigoted Aurangzíb in the seventeenth century, the sect prospered and became a nation, which few religious associations in India have ever done, enlisting armies of brave and enthusiastic warriors, and at one time threatening to become the paramount power in Upper India.

It is believed that Nának Sháh visited Dacca, for a large well, in a quarter of the city called J'afarábád, is still pointed out as a place where he sat and drank water. Panjábí sepoys always visit it, and make offerings to their Guru. Futhermore, there is little doubt that his successor, Tegh Bahádur, came to Dacca about 1670, and a portrait, said to have been sketched by himself, still hangs in the Sútrapúr Sangat in the city.

For many generations a small Ákhára belonging to the Nának-Sháhís has existed in Shujá'atpúr, a northern suburb.

This monastery, situated in the centre of an old Muhammadan garden, surrounded by dense, impenetrable jungle, was assigned by a Nawáb of Dacca as a home for the Udásí, or religious sect of Nának Sháh. The first Gosáin was one Níta Sáhib, the disciple of Almat Sháh, who again was the pupil of the son of Nának Sháh. The grave of Nita Sáhib is still shown, as well as a goodly Kámaranga tree (*Averrhóa carambola*) that grew from his toothpick!

The present establishment consists of a Goṣáin, or Sunnyásí, who is a Panjábí Bráhman, and an old woman from Hindustan, who accompanied her father on a pilgrimage to Balwá-Khund, in Chittagong, and when he died became a servant (sevaka) and pupil in the monastery. The Gosáin is a tall muscular Sikh, with hair plaited and rolled round his head, and a long necklace of white coral beads around his neck. The chief occupation of the inmates is chanting passages of the "Ṣambhu Grantha," and making frequent oblations to it. Having no endowment, the Gosáin is obliged to visit the city daily in search of alms, and starvation would long ere this have closed the monastery, but for the benevolence of a few Armenian and Muhammadan gentlemen of Dacca. The Gosáin estimates his followers at one hundred, but one half are too poor to contribute anything to his support.

The Nának-Sháhís have adopted many Hindu rites. Special worship is held on the Ṣivarátrí, Doljátrá, and during the Durga Pújah. At the foot of a fine Ámlá tree (*Phyllanthus emblica*) in the Ákhára garden is the Charaṇa, or footprint, of a former Gosáin, which is daubed over with red Abír powder at the Holí festival.

Owing to poverty, the Udásís allege they are obliged to frequent the holy places of the Hindus and observe all their religious ceremonies. When travelling an Udásí carries a lotah, a wooden platter (Kaṭhrá) for alms, a dried gourd, a pair of long pincers (Chimṭá), and a dried deer's skin, while many wear a Kaṛá, or ring, with the same object as the Roman "Citharoedus," described by Juvenal,[1] wore the "fibula."

In the days of the Nawábs there were nine Sangats, or places of worship, belonging to this sect in the city, and within living memory there were three in Mahalla Úrdú; but now there is only one, known as the Sangat of Tegh Bahádur, in Sútrapúr. It, too, is languishing, and the twenty houses forming Sangat-ṭolá being deserted, there is every prospect of the sect becoming extinct in Eastern Bengal. Only four Panjábí Bráhmans reside in the city, and all the old families who attended the services have died off. The Mahant is therefore obliged to take service, the worship at the Sangat being performed by a Panjábí

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[1] Sat. vi, 73.

Chhatrí born in Dacca. Although there is no material difference, there is much latent jealousy, between these two Nának-Sháhí Mahants. The head of the Sangat does not make disciples of Bengali castes as the Shujá'atpúr Gosáin does. The former, again, is chiefly supported by Sikh sepoys quartered in Dacca, the latter by low Bengali castes. The Gosáin eats with the Chhatrí priest, but he will only touch "púrí," cake fried in butter, made by the Gosáin.

The Grihí, or married followers of Nának-Sháh, celebrate all the popular Hindu festivals, smoke tobacco, drink Bháng to excess, and wear the long beards and voluminous turbans of the Sikhs.

Among the Udásís of the Nának-Shahí, as well as among Jogí Sannyásís, the miserable creatures, who, having devoted a limb to God's service, hold the outstretched arm so long upright that it becomes fixed.

In 1874, one of these mendicants, a Panjábí Bráhman, aged 40, reached Dacca. His left arm was raised upright, having remained so for nearly thirty years. The arm was much atrophied, the head of the humerus resting on the floor of the axilla, and when accidentally struck acute pain shot through it. The pectoral muscles had shrunk to mere bands, while those that raise the arm were hard and tense. The fingers were bent, and the thumb lay on the first phalanx of the middle finger, the nail having a slight curve upwards, doubtless intentionally produced to prevent its eating into the flesh. The nail of the ring finger from its matrix to the point measured three inches, while that of the forefinger was twisted like a ram's horn.

This man belonged to the Rámráyí subdivision of the Nának-Sháhís, whose head-quarters are in the Deyra Dhún. His dress consisted of garments dyed with yellow ochre, while on his forehead was a sectarial mark painted with wood ashes. He was a vegetarian, abstaining from flesh, fish, and spirits, but he smoked Gánjha to great excess.

TRÍ NÁTH PÚJÁ, TRÍ NÁTH MELÁ.

This fantastic worship of modern date has spread with wonderful rapidity among the fisher and agricultural population of Eastern Bengal, and seems to have been intended to incorporate the three deities, or triad, of the Hindus with the Triune God of the Christians. In Dacca the founder of the sect is said to have been Ánanda Chunder Dás, a constable in the municipal police, but as the peculiar ritual of the worshippers has gained followers in Rájsháhí, Pubna, Farrídpúr, and all the eastern districts, it is likely that some one of more influence and education originated it.

The following account is abstracted from a lithographed Bengali pamphlet on the doctrines of this new-fangled worship :—

In the beginning Harí revealed himself as Gaur Rúpa, afterwards as Brahma, Vishnu, and Ṣiv, but on account of the grievous sins of the world he has appeared in these last days as Trínáth, pointing out a new road to salvation. The priesthood had waxed proud, and as wealth accumulated, divine worship became a prerogative of the rich, an impossibility for the poor. The intention of the modern revelation was to limit the expense of worship, and three paisa, a sum within the reach of all, was prescribed as the fitting pecuniary donation. Each worshipper is therefore instructed to buy one paisa worth of Indian hemp, one of betle-nut, and one of mustard oil before entering the meeting house, and on his arrival to pour the oil into a large lamp in the middle of the room, with a wick made of three cotton threads twisted to form one, and to deposit the other articles in a tray common to all.

Before the beginning of the service all join in shouting "Trínáth! Ánanda, Harí! Harí! Bala!" The congregation then squatting around the lamp chew betle, smoke Gánjha, and listen to prayers, and to the Panchálí, or metrical confession of faith, as long as the lamp burns; but as soon as the light flickers, the company disperses.

The Panchálí, or poetical narrative, consists of hymns in praise of Trínáth, and of verses exhorting to faith in the new revelation, and to disbelief in the efficacy of all other creeds. The meetings, always held after sundown, but on no fixed day, may be convened by any one desirous of fulfilling a vow, of averting a threatening calamity, or of returning thanks for the mercies and blessings of the past. Women are rarely present at the meetings, consequently no immorality is practised, but men belonging to all castes associate together at them.

Such is the impious worship that is attracting crowds of uneducated and credulous Chaṇḍáls, Kaibarttas, and Tíyars throughout Eastern Bengal. The influence of the Guru and Purohit is still powerful, but they can only discourage a worship which brings them no honour or reward. It is difficult to account for the rise of such a creed unless we believe that the Brahmanical hold on the people is relaxing, and that the masses blindly accept any worship which recognises the equality and brotherhood of all classes of mankind.

SECTION III.

HINDU CASTES AND ABORIGINAL RACES.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS ON CASTE.
NINE CLEAN CASTES.
CASTES HOLDING AN UNCERTAIN POSITION.
UTTERLY VILE CASTES.
HINDUSTÁNI CASTES DEGRADED BY RESIDENCE IN BENGAL.
CASTES AND RACES MET WITH IN EASTERN BENGAL:—

Ahír.—(*a*) Gauriya—(*b*) Mahisha Goála.
Bádlá-gar.
Baidyá.
Banpar.
Báotí.
Baqqál.
Baráí.
Battí-wálah.
Bediyá.—(*a*) Ba-bajiyá—(*b*) Bází-gar—(*c*) Mál—(*d*) Mír-Shikár—(*e*) Sámperia—(*f*) Shándár—(*g*) Rasīa.
Beṛua.
Bhúinhár Bráhmans.
Bhúinmálí.
Bind.
Bráhman.—(*a*) Ráṛhí—(*b*) Varendra—(*c*) Vaidika—(*d*) Sapta-ṣati—(*e*) Bhaṭ—(*f*) Áchárjí—(*g*) Agradána.
Cháín.
Chamár.
Chaṇḍál.
Dhobá.
Doí.
Dosádh.
Gaḍariyá.
Gandha-banik.
Gandhí.
Gaṇrár.
Ghaṭak.
Goála.—(*a*) Sáda Goála—(*b*) Daira Goála.
Godná-wálí.
Halwah Dás.
Jaliyá.
Jauharí.
Jogí.—(*a*) Ját-Jogí.
Kácharu.
Kahár.
Kaibartta.

Kámár.
Kanaujiyá Bráhmans.
Kándho.
Kándú.
Káṉsárí.
Kantha Bráhman.
Kápálí.
Karní.
Karrál.
Kawálí.
Káyath.—(*a*) HINDUSTÁNÍ K.
Kewaṭ.
Khatrí.
Kíchaka.
Kochh Mandai.
Koerí
Kumár.—(*a*) RÁJ-MAHALLIA KUMÁR—(*b*) KUMHÁR.
Kurmí.
Lálbegí.
Lohait-Kori.
Madhu-Nápit.
Maithila Bráhman.
Málákár.
Malláh.
Málo.
Muriárí.
Nápit.
Nar.
Núniyá.
Páchaka.
Paráṣara Dás.
Pásí.
Páṭial.
Paṭní.
Rángá Wálah.
Ráwat.
Ṛishí.
Śánkhárí.
Sarvaria Bráhman.
Sekrí.
Ṣilarí.
Śonár.—(*a*) BANGA—(*b*) DAKHIN RÁṚHÍ—(*c*) UTTAR RÁṚHÍ—(*d*) NADIYÁ.
Súnṛi.
Suraiya.
Súraj-bansí.
Sutár.
Tántí.—(*a*) HINDUSTÁNÍ TÁNTÍ.
Támbúlí.
Telí.
Tin-wálah.
Tíyar.
Vaiṣya

HINDU.

THE Hindus of Bengal claim to be pure Aryans, but the Hindus of Upper India repudiate any relationship with them. The Aryan immigration extended gradually throughout Bengal, and the tie which bound the settlers to their faith and peculiar usages was relaxed by residence among aliens. The example of races untrammelled by caste, or religious scruples, also led them to shake off all bonds, and assert greater freedom of action. The priesthood formed illegal connections, and neglected their religious duties; while the mixed offspring observed none of the Bráhmanical ordinances. In the tenth century corruption and irreligion being universal, Adisúra introduced priests, trained in the orthodox school of Kanauj, to reform and educate the people. But the arrival of a small body of religious teachers did little towards elevating the Bráhmans, or laity, and in the twelfth century Ballál Sen found only nineteen families of the Káṛhí Bráhmans living in strict obedience to all that their religion demanded. These families were raised to the highest rank, but those who had forfeited all respect, and formed illegal marriages, were reduced to secondary, or even lower grades. The innovations made by this monarch only affected the Káṛhí and Varendra Ṣreṇi, or orders, for the Vaidika and Bhaṭ, refusing to be classified by a Vaidyá, retired into the hill countries of Silhet and Orissa; and the other tribes, who had become hopelessly demoralized, were left untouched.

The chief object of the reform organised by Ballál Sen was the creation of an aristocratic and powerful hierarchy, placed in such a position of dignity that no misdemeanor, and no immorality, could deprive it of hereditary privileges, or the reverence of the lower classes. An illegal marriage was the only transgression entailing loss of rank and forfeiture of respect. No provision was made in this new code for the elevation of the lower ranks, when families became extinct, consequently, as Kulin houses disappeared, the difficulty of procuring husbands for daughters vastly increased, and when the third re-organisation of the order was made by Deví Vara, in the fourteenth century, polygamy, and the buying and selling of wives, was the engrossing occupation of the twice-born Bráhmans.

In spite of these successive endeavours for securing the purity of the Bengali Bráhmans, it is remarkable that Kanaujiya, and other Bráhmanical tribes of Hindustan, have always despised and repudiated any connection with their Bengali brethren. In their religious and domestic ceremonies, habits of life, and mode of living, Bengali Bráhmans are quite distinct from any of the other tribes, and the only point of attachment between them is when outcast Kanaujiyas marry Ṣrotriyá maidens, and become absorbed into their ranks. Although clinging with characteristic pertinacity to all the prerogatives of their order, modern ideas are gradually undermining their bulwarks, and the exclusive rules are step by step yielding to education and the progress of the nation. Kulín Bráhmans are now found adorning the bench, the bar, and the medical profession, and, while proving useful members of society, exert a rare influence for good over their Hindu countrymen.

Besides the Raṛhi and Varendra tribes, there were in Bengal four inferior classes of Bráhmans left out of the organisation of Ballál Sen, namely, the Vaidika, Sapta-ṣati, Áchárya, and Agradána. The three first claim to have been resident in Bengal before the reign of that monarch, and the services of all the four are still required by the Ráṛhi Ṣreṇi at many important ceremonies. The Vaidika is the only division that has preserved an honourable position; but whether this is owing to their being descendants of Kanaujiya Bráhmans, to the respectability and decency of their lives, or to their independence of character, is very doubtful. They decline to give their daughters in marriage to the Kulin Bráhmans of Bikrampúr, and refuse to act for any clean Ṣúdra, or Bráhman, unless his family can trace their origin to Kanauj. The Sapta-ṣati, undoubtedly one of the oldest Bengali septs, is gradually being absorbed by the Ṣrotriyá, and few confess they belong to it. In a few years they will be sought for in vain. The Áchárya and Agradána are Bráhmans only in name. The former are chiefly employed in secular occupations, and in discharging duties useful, but unknown to the Vedas or Puráṇas. The Agradána, claiming to rank above Áchárya, is the most despised of the sacred order, and clean Ṣúdras, as well as Patit Bráhmans, would be degraded by eating with them

The Patit Bráhmans are the most active representatives of the Hindu hierarchy, having fallen from their high estate by neglecting religious duties, officiating in Ṣúdra temples, marrying into inferior grades, or acting as Purohits to the Varṇa Ṣankara.[1] The loss of rank has in some respects been mitigated by the affection and devotion of the laity, and by the high social position given by the caste for which they officiate. It is to this class, abandoned by the Kulins, that India owes the spread of the Hindu religion among the wild tribes of the Taráí, Assam, and Eastern Bengal, and the conversion of the semi-Hinduized aborigines throughout Bengal. Bad and immoral many of these Ṣúdra Bráhmans are, but as a class their lives are not one long course of depravity and selfish indulgence, as is too often the case with the Kulins. Education has made no progress among them, and holding the position they do, concession to the wants of the age is not to be expected. Their hold over the men is slowly loosening, but the women still obey, and worship them, and while this subjection lasts Hindu caste and Hindu exclusiveness will remain.

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[1] Literally mixture of colours, hence mixture of castes.

Though not recognised in books, many social grades are found among these fallen Bráhmans. Those ministering to the Nava-ṣákha,[1] popularly called Ṣúdra Bráhmans, occupy a position of comparative distinction; but at the bottom of the scale Bráhmans appear, who are accounted lower than the vile caste they serve; while such an individual as the Chaṇḍál, or Ḍôm, Bráhman scarcely deserves to be called by that proud title.

The Vaiṣya caste, standing next the sacred order, occupies a very anomalous and strange position. Their claim to be genuine Vaiṣyas is admitted by the higher classes, but the Ballálí Vaidyá and Káyath refuse to touch food prepared by them. This small caste deny that Ballál Sen re-organised, or interfered in any way with their regulations, and for this reason it remains isolated and unrecognised by Hindus.

The two next castes are the Vaidyá and Káyath, who repudiate the name of Ṣúdra, and maintain that Ballál Sen did not enroll them among the "Nava-Ṣákha." Both are satisfied to rest their title of superiority on the fabulous births of their reputed ancestors. Ballál Sen belonged to the Vaidyá caste, and it is to his partiality that it secured pre-eminence. On one section the Bráhmanical cord was bestowed, although the caste profession was a dishonourable one, and Ghaṭaks were engaged to preserve the family purity. There has always existed much latent jealousy between the Vaidyá and Káyath, but the latter acknowledge some inferiority, although the cause of this difference is never defined.

The Káyath is undoubtedly one of the oldest tribes in Bengal, but it is unnecessary to believe all that is said of Ádisúra and the five servants of the five Kanaujiya Bráhmans. One branch, the Bangaja,[2] has been settled for many generations at Edilpúr, along with the caste Ghaṭaks, and Kulin Káyath families are as punctilious and as vain of their birth as any Gánguli, or Mukharji, although the Lálás of Mathurá and Agra laugh at such pretensions, and will not recognise them as Káyaths at all.

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[1] Or Nava-Ṣayáka, the nine inferior castes.

[2] Banga, or Vanga-ja, Bengali born.

The Kevala, or pure Súdra, does not exist in Bengal. All castes below the Bráhman belong to the " Varṇa-Ṣankara," being the offspring of parents of different tribes.

The recognized authorities on caste are the Institutes of Menu, the Játi Nirṇaya chapter of the Brahma-Vaivartta Puráṇa,[1] and the Játimálá. According to the Bráhmans it was the wickedness of Veṇa, the Rájarshi, who ordered that no worship should be performed, no oblations offered, and no gifts bestowed on Bráhmans, and caused the people to disobey the laws and intermarry with prohibited classes. Until his era Bráhmans only married Bráhmans, Ṣúdras women of their own rank, and Chaṇḍálas followed their own tribal customs. It was natural for the priests to attribute the irreligious propensities of the people to a cause like this; but there is no doubt that laws prescribed by the Bráhmans for maintaining the purity of their order must have been soon violated by those in whose favour they were enacted. Although marriages between individuals of different tribes gave origin to the Varṇa-Ṣankara, or mixed castes, the Puráṇas give other explanations. According to the Brahma-Vaivartta Puráṇa, the gardener, blacksmith, shellcutter, weaver, potter, and brasier are descended from the offspring of Viṣvakarma, the celestial architect, and Ghṛitáchi, an Apsará, or nymph of heaven, and hence it is that all Kárus, or artisans, worship their progenitor with exceptional reverence. The reasons, again, why certain casts are degraded, are often quite ludicrous, but this does not cause their rejection. The Sútradhára lost rank for refusing to supply the Bráhman with sacrificial wood; the Chitrakára for painting execrably; and the Suvarṇakára for stealing gold given him to mould an idol. The modern Súnṛí, moreover, does not resent being told that his ancestor was created from the chips of the mutilated trunk of Ganeṣa, nor the Kumár that Ṣiv transformed a waterpot into the first potter.

According to the classification of Ballál Sen, as interpreted in Eastern Bengal, the nine following castes are considered pure, and the so called Ṣúdra Bráhman officiates for all:—

Ṣánkhárí
Tántí
Kámár
Kumár
Málákár
Nápit
Gop-Goála
Madhu Nápit
Baráí.

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[1] A Synopsis of this is given in the " Calcutta Review," vol. xv, p. 60.

Judging, however, by traditions still surviving, the position of a caste in the new roll depended chiefly on its usefulness and importance to the community at large. The profession which had proved itself essential to the comfort, or welfare, of the Hindu hierarchy, was at once promoted to a higher level, while the less important was reduced. Thus the Tántí, unclean in Bihár, became clean in Dacca, and the indispensable barber was raised to the same social level as the Káyasth. The relative position of the various castes is still a burning question in Bengal, and in large villages, where any caste predominates, its claims to superior rank are usually conceded. For instance, the Gandha-banik, Telí, Támbúlí, and Káṉsárí often assert to good purpose the right of being enrolled among the nine, and, if their voice be sufficiently loud and influential, it will be heard.

The Nava-Ṣákha have five servants, or Pancha-vartta, attached to them in common, who possess the prescriptive right of attending at all caste and family celebrations. The five servants are the Bráhman, Málákár, Dhobá, Nápit, and Naṭa, or musician, who are presumed to be exclusively engaged in the service of the Ṣúdras, but they also earn money by waiting on lower castes. Even now-a-days some work for the Súrya-vaṉsi, who ten years ago were not Hindus in name, while others readily work for the Báotí, Kapálí, Kawálí, Paráṣara Dás, and other tribes of doubtful origin. Where the fisher castes are numerous, and cannot be overlooked, no difficulty is found in engaging their services. They work indeed for all castes employing a Patit Bráhman, but the utterly vile tribes, the Bhúinmálí, Chamár, Paṭní, and Súnṛí, having Bráhmans of their own, are not served by the Pancha-vartta. To this general rule, however, there are exceptions. The worshipful barber, for instance, condescends to shave, but will not pare the nails of the rich Sáha merchant.

Although caste is no longer revered as an old institution sanctified by religion and immemorial usage, and is disappearing before the assaults of modern civilisation, a tendency to the formation of new castes still exists. Semi-Hinduized races are being enrolled among Hindus, and old established castes are being split up by adopting new occupations. But if this new occupation be not dishonouring, the Purohit continues his ministration. For instance, the great Chaṇḍál tribe has given off eight branches, yet the Chaṇḍál Bráhman officiates for all. On the other hand, the agricultural Kaibarttas, having taken to a base employment, are obliged to support a Purohit of their own.

Between the Ṣúdras and the Nícha, or vile, castes many tribes, organised by degraded Bráhmans, or united by the exigencies of modern civilisation, are found occupying an uncertain position, exposed to the sneers of the exclusive and conservative Ṣúdras.

These intermediate castes are:—

Báotí
Baqqál
Bháṭ
Beṛua
Halwah Dás
Kándho
Kapálí
Karní
Karrál
Kawálí
Lohait Korí
Nar
Paráṣara Dás
Páṭial
Sutár.

In the Tantras,[1] the epithet Antya-ja, or inferior, is applied to the following seven tribes, washerman, currier, mimic (Naṭa), fisherman, "Meda," or attendant on women, cane-splitter (Varuḍa) and mountaineer (Bhilla). The term Antyávasáyin, or dwellers outside the town, was given to the Dôm, Pan, Háṛí, and other sweeper castes.

We however possess a very correct list[2] of the outcast tribes in Bengal in the roll of pilgrims excluded from the temple of Jagannáth. If prohibited castes are distinguished from professions there are only eleven castes so utterly disreputable that they dare not enter the sanctuary. These are the

Súnṛí
Nama-Ṣúdra
Dhobá
Jogí
Kahár
Ráj-Vaṉsi
Chamár
Dôm
Tíyar
Bhúinmálí
Háṛí.

Much information regarding caste, as understood in Bengal, is obtained by comparing the relative position of Hindustánís who reside, or temporarily sojourn there, with that of castes native to the province.

Permanent residence is always attended by social expulsion, but a stay of a few years is with some castes a disqualification, with others it is not so. For example, the Ahír, Surahiyá, and Kanaujiyá Bráhmans, who keep up communication with their kindred and marry from their own homes, are reckoned pure; but the Kahár, Ahír, and Kándú domiciled in Bengal forfeit all claim to be considered stainless. By adopting local Ṣúdra customs and marrying with women of the country Hindustání tribes are stigmatized as "Khonṭá," or debased. The Kanaujiya Bráhman, again, expelled by his family for these delinquencies, finds shelter in the ranks of the Ṣrotriyá, but above this he cannot expect to rise, and his children must be content with a very ambiguous position.

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[1] Colebrooke's "Essays" ii, 164.

[2] Harington's "Analysis" iii, 213; Hunter's "Orissa" i 136.

The steps by which a Hindustání caste loses its original rank, and gains a new one, may be traced in the case of the potters. The Kumhár of Bihár is always unclean in Bengal, but if he marries a kinswoman he may return to his home without loss of rank. The Ráj-Mahallia potters, however, being in an intermediate state, have neither risen to an equality with the Bengali Kumár, nor remained unclean like the Kumhár. The Ṣúdras of Bengal drink from their water vessels, and, still more blessed, the Ṣúdra Bráhman ministers unto them. Lastly, the Bengali Kumár, originally of the same stock, has become in the course of ages a pure Ṣúdra, and one of the Nava-Ṣákha.

In no instance, however, is the separation between kindred castes so striking as with the Chamárs and Rishís. Both belong to the same tribe, both are equally vile in the eyes of Hindus, and both live apart from all other castes, yet similar occupations not only excite jealousy and enmity but prevent all friendly intercourse between them.

Occupations, moreover, which a Hindustání may engage in at home without stain or obliquy are sometimes unbecoming when the habitation is in Bengal. Thus the Dômni and Chamáín, professional musicians in Upper India, are disgraced by plying for hire in Bengal, while on the other hand such menial work as the Mungírya Tántís perform in Daca would be considered very debasing in their own district.

Although continuous residence at a distance usually repels, a brief sojourn sometimes draws together disunited subdivisions. Thus the different branches of Ahírs and Chhatrís intermarry in Bengal and lose caste, although debarred from doing so in Hindustan.

The Bráhmanical order to which the Purohit belongs is generally a nice test of the rank accorded to a Hindustání caste. Among the lower tribes the Guru belongs either to one of the Daṣnámí orders, or he is a Vaishnava Bhagat,[1] who visits his flock at regular intervals, confirming the old, and teaching the young the rudiments of their faith. Maithila Bráhmans, on the other hand, ordinarily act as Purohits to Kurmí, Chhatrí, Kándú, Ahír, Cháín, and Kewaṭ; but Chhatrís are occasionally found with a Sarsút, or Sarasvatí, Bráhman, and Kurmís and Dosádhs with a Ṣákadvípa. The Kanaujiya tribe again ministers to Binds, Tántís, and Gádaṛiyás. In the case of the Raṇḍa Khatrís whose parentage is equivocal, the strange phase is found of a Kanaujiya acting as Purohit, a Ṣrotriyá of Bengal as Guru.

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[1] A corruption of Sanskrit Bhakta, "the devoted," hence a mendicant.

A most important distinction between Hindustání and Bengali castes of similar origin, is the religious belief found among them. It may be said with perfect truth that Vaishnavism, in one or other of its diverse forms, to the exclusion of Ṣaivaism and all other creeds, is the faith professed by the agricultural, artizan, and fisher tribes of Bengal. The worship of Kṛishna has, for obvious reasons, attracted well nigh all the Goála, and other pastoral tribes of India. The teaching of Chaitanya and his successors has made little progress among Hindustání castes, but the sympathetic creeds of Kabír and Nának Sháh have attracted multitudes of disciples. The Kurmís and Dosádhs especially patronize Kabír; the Kewaṭs, Kumhárs, and many Dosádhs enroll themselves under the banner of Nának.

It is among castes from Northern Bengal, such as the Kándú, Bind, Muriárí, and Surahiyá, that the followers of the strange Pánch Píriya creed are to be met with. Other curious sects, unknown to Bengal, are also found in their ranks. The Tirhutiyá Tántís are members of the Buddh Rám communion. Kurmís often profess the doctrines taught by Darya Dás, and many Dosádhs those of Tulasí Dás. Still more worthy of notice is the existence among them of an old prehistoric cultus. The apotheosis of robber chiefs by Dosádhs, the deification of evil spirits, as Rahu by the Dosádhs, Kasi Baba by Binds, and Madhu Kunwár by Tántís, and the animistic idea endowing with life and personality the destructive energy of the Ganges, are all forms of belief unknown to castes native to Bengal.

AHÍR. ÁBHÍRA.

This important Hindustání pastoral caste is frequently met with in Eastern Bengal, the members assuming a superiority over the Goála, and refusing to hold any social intercourse with it. The Ahír forfeits caste privileges by settling in Bengal, but if he only resides for a short time, a wife can be got from his home in Bihár.

In Gorakhpúr the Ahír stands immediately below the Káyath, being regarded as a pure Ṣúdra; but in Bengal he is impure in the eyes of Ṣúdras and Gop-Goálas.

Ahírs are generally handsome, with fine delicate features, retaining in Bengal their ancestral love of spirits and pork. The tribe is known everywhere by a ceremony, peculiar to itself, called Gáe-dágha, Gáe-dhar, or Gokrirah. On the day after the Díwálí, and on the day before the new moon of Kártik (Sept.-Oct.), Ahírs place a cow, which has lately calved, within an enclosure where a pig is confined. They beat drums, sing, and shout outside until the cow, maddened by the din, gores or butts the pig to death, when the carcass is removed, cooked, and eaten.[1]

The flesh of the wild pig is also esteemed a great delicacy by Ahírs, and when procurable is made the occasion of much conviviality.

In Bengal the subdivisions of the Ahirs are—

Kanaujiyá,
Maghaiyá,
Majrotí,
Mungíryá,
Puchiára,
Kṛishnautí,
Gauṛiya.

As with other composite castes the subdivisions vary according to locality, and clannish prejudices disappear in a foreign land. For instance, in Dacca the Mungíryá and Gauṛiyá intermarry, although it is forbidden in Bihár.

All Ahírs in Dacca belong to a "gotra," called Kaṣyapa, and the majority worship Kṛishna, only a few following the Ṣákta ritual. Ahírs observe the Sráddha on the eleventh day after death, and their funeral service is performed by the Mahá-pátra, or Kantha, Bráhman.

Ahírs sell milk, but are degraded by making butter, curds, or clotted milk. Bullocks cannot properly be used by Hindus in the plough or oil-mill, but the Ahír has no compunction about selling a vicious or unmanageable bull to the Muhammadan Kolú.

Bengal Ahírs never prepare the yellow paint called "Pewri,"[2] as is done in Mungír, although the Palaṣa tree (*Butea frondosa*) is one of the commonest jungle trees.

(*a*) GAUṚIYÁ.

The Gauṛiyá is the most numerous subdivision of Ahírs in Bengal, and to it belong the Uriya palanquin bearers of Calcutta, and the professional Laṭhiáls, or clubmen, of Kishnaghur and Jessore.

In Eastern Bengal they are reckoned a very impure race who castrate bulls, brand cattle, and act as cow-doctors, being on this account generally styled Go-baidyá, or Dághania Goálás.[3]

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[1] This cow baiting exactly resembles the Binda-parab of the Bhúmij. Dalton, "Descriptive Ethnology," p. 176.

[2] Sanskrit Go-rochana, and used for painting Hindu sectarial marks, and walls of bungalows.

[3] In Northern Bengal the cow-doctor is called Hádiq.

These Ahírs, chiefly residing in Jessore, have become naturalised in Bengal as cultivators, resembling in physique and appearance the common Bengali peasantry, though they still employ a few Hindi words when speaking the vernacular. It is alleged that in Jessore the Gauṛiyá is reckoned a pure Ṣúdra caste, but farther east utterly abominable. A Patit Bráhman ministers at their religious ceremonies, which are distinct from those observed by the Goálá of the Ballálí country. No genuine Ṣúdra Goálá would do the menial work of the Go-baidyá, nevertheless, a fallen tribe of Goálas in Tipperah is said to practise as cow-doctors.

The Gauṛiya have only one gotra, the Aliman.

During the cold season the Go-baidyás wander throughout the country, and in villages may be distinguished by the cry "Goru dágha ba!" or simply "Kemon!" How is it?

Preparatory to branding or operating on animals, the Go-baidyás always invoke Kṛishná and the two Páṇḍava brothers, Nakula and Sahadeva. They use skewers and awls of different shapes and sizes for opening abscesses and puncturing swollen houghs, but deny that they ever castrate bulls, and certainly no cutting instrument is ever found in their wallets. The Ṛishí and Hajjám, however, who undoubtedly do so, positively assert that the Go-baidyá is the recognised operator.

Go-baidyás brand the cattle of the peasantry, and treat the diseases of domestic animals with a few simples. In swollen joints they administer mashes of wild fig leaves and salt, or of the Arum, heated with salt, while they wrap the joint with poultices of pounded leaves. In œdema of the head the forehead is freely cauterised with two red hot iron hooks (dágh), which are also employed in making the common reversed semicircular marks on native cattle.

In small-pox (Basanta) Go-baidyás trust to a mash of "Ním" leaves, wild ginger, green turmeric, and the pounded bark of the Seorhá tree; while in catarrhs wild fig leaves are said to be very beneficial.

(b) MAHISHA GOÁLÁ.

The Mahisha, or, as they are called in the Dacca dialect, Maisan, Goálás, derive their name from Mahisha, the Sanskrit for a buffalo, and were originally Ahírs from Patna and Mungír, who have been settled for several generations in Eastern Bengal. In towns, having ceased to keep buffaloes, they own dairies, and sell milk.

On the uncultivated "chars" or islands of the Dhullaserry, these Bengalí-speaking Ahírs tend herds of buffaloes belonging to Sáha merchants, and sell the milk to Gop-Goálás, who pay in advance for it. The herdsman keeps a daily account of the quantity sold, and at the end of each month his tale of milk is balanced, and compared with that kept by the purchaser.

Buffaloes give from four to five pounds of milk daily, a smaller quantity than in Bihár; but the "ghí" prepared from it is more highly priced, and more palatable, according to native taste, than "ghí" made from cow's milk. Bull calves are always sold as victims for sacrifices, the Bhúinmálí and Ṛishí eating the flesh, and the latter tanning the hides. As the annual inundation subsides, wild bulls from the neighbouring jungles of Bhowál visit the herds, and after remaining several weeks with the cows, revert to their wild habits.

Widow marriages, and the Gáe-dágha ceremony, are no longer observed.

BÁDLÁ-GAR.

The trade of wire drawing, or Tár-kash, is followed by Hindus of all castes, and sometimes by Muhammadans, in a very primitive manner.

Silver wire is heated, and merely passed through apertures in a steel plate, according to the fineness wanted. In gilding silver the following method is adopted. China gold leaf wrapped round the silver is put over a charcoal fire, and slowly heated. When partially fuzed it is withdrawn, and burnished with "Lahsan patthar," perhaps soapstone, after which it is drawn into wire, and sold to workers in Zardozí, or Zarí, and Kárchob.[1]

The Bádlá-gar also manufactures "chamkí," or spangles, and Gokhru-goṭa, or filigree ankle bells.

BAIDYÁ, VAIDYÁ, BAID, VAIDA.

The Baidyá is one of the most respected castes in Bengal. ranking immediately after the Vaiṣyas, and before the Káyaths. They are peculiar to Bengal, and in Bihár the Ṣákadvíp Bráhmans are the regular physicians.

The origin of the Baidyá caste is unknown, but the following tradition satisfies the curiosity of the Hindus. In the house of Gálava Muní was a Vaiṣya damsel, named Ambá, who one day returning from the river met the sage, and was asked for a drink of water, which she gave. The Muní blessed her, and said, "May you have many children!" She laughingly replied, "How can I, an unmarried girl, have children?" The sage having expressed the wish could not recall it, so he ordered her to bring a wisp of Kuṣa grass, which he transformed into a male child; the girl was naturally bewildered by the gift, as she could not return home, where eviction was certain, so the Muní sent for a Brahman and made him marry her. This miraculous child, called Ámrita Ácháryá, was instructed by Gálava Muní in the Áyur-Veda, or science of medicine. It is also related that by her Bráhman husband Ambá bore, among other children, a son called Ambashṭha, the father of such as practise medicine.

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[1] In Dacca Zardozí often means muslins embroidered with gold or silver thread, in contradistinction to Kárchob, or brocade.

Under Bráhmanical rule the physician was not highly esteemed, and when a Bráhman encountered one on his return from bathing, he was polluted and obliged to go back and wash his clothes before touching food. In Menu we are informed that physicians and surgeons acting unskilfully must pay to the injured party the middle amercement.[1] The Sanskrit name for a physician is Chikit-saka, from Chikit, understanding, or Agadankára, "one who makes well," and it is said that he had charge of dispensaries (Aushadha-álaya, or Aushadha-ágára), where ready-made medicines were prepared and sold.

Although we know nothing of the origin of the Baidyá caste, history tells us that a Baidyá dynasty ruled over Bengal during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The most famous of these Rájahs were Ballál Sena, and his supposititious son, Lakshmaṇa Sena, and it is to the domestic quarrels of the royal family that the separation of the caste into two divisions is popularly referred. Before their time, it is said, all Baidyás belonged to one clan, the members of which intermarried with one another as all were equal in rank. Ballál Sen, however, having determined on marrying a Dôm-Paṭní girl, his son Lakshmaṇa Sen, and the majority of the caste, protested against its legality, and on finding their remonstrances unheeded, broke the sacred cord, which all Baidyás then wore, and retired into a distant part of the country, where their descendants have ever since preserved the singularity of never wearing a "paitá."[2] The dishonour inflicted on the caste recoiled, it is related, on the head of its author, and Ballál Sen sought in vain for a Baidyá bride for his younger son.

At the present day Baidyás are subdivided into families following the peculiar rites of the Vaíṣyas (Vaíṣya-áchár), and wearing the sacred cord, and others practising the Ṣúdra rites

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[1] Menu, ix, 284.

[2] From Sanskrit Pavitra, the sacred thread.

(Ṣúdra áchár); but any member of the caste can assume the cord on his complying with the proper regulations of investiture.

A tradition survives, that Ballál Sen, among his other popular reforms, separated the Baidyás into three classes, Varendra, Ráṛhí, and Banga, according to the place of their abode, and conferred the rank of Kulins on the Dhanvantarí and Madhu Kuliyá gotras. In course of time, owing to the frequent marriages of blood relations, the Hingu gotra was also included among the Kulin class. The Baidyás were finally distributed in twenty-seven "sthán s," or communes, beyond which no one could reside without loss of caste. The principal settlements were at Shinátí, Chandam Mahál, Daspáṛá, Puígráma, Karoria, Shendia, Itna, and Bhutta-pratáp in Jessore, Poragáchha in Bikrampúr, and Dásora and Chánd-pratáp in Dacca.

In 1872 the census returns exhibit a total of 68,353 Baidyás in Bengal proper, of whom 37,180, or 54 per cent., resided in Eastern Bengal; while in Báqirganj there were 12,960; in Dacca 8,420; in Burdwán 5,004; in the twenty-four Parganahs 4,556; and in Silhet 3,291.

The Samáj-patí, or presidency of the Banga Baidyás, has for several generations been vested in the family of Rájah Ráj Bullabh of Rájnagar, who reside on the south bank of the Padma river, but though now poor and dependent, the members are still consulted on all tribal matters. Formerly, Bráhmans ate whatever the Baidyá prepared with milk, or ghí; but now they refuse to do so, at least in public. The caste Bráhmans deny that they are Ṣúdras, but it is the fact that the Bráhmans who officiate for the Nava-ṣákha also officiate for Baidyás.

A Baidyá who wears the sacred cord is prohibited from marrying into a household which does not; but in Silhet, beyond the range of the regulations of Ballál Sen, Baidyás, Káyaths, and even Súnṛís are at liberty to intermarry. When equals marry a curious custom is observed by Baidyás. A bond is executed notifying that the bridegroom has received twelve rupees, but should a second son marry he executes a bond for twenty-four, and if a third, the acknowledgement is for thirty-six, but beyond this it never goes. Again, if a Baidyá marries into an inferior gotra, he is dishonoured, and can only recover his social position by marrying his sister, or daughter, into a Kulin family, hence a common saying in Bengal, that rising and falling is the Baidyá's kul, or lot.

The four principal gotras of the Banga Baidyás are—

Dhanvantarí,	Ṣaktrí,
Madhu Kuliyá,	Kaṣyapa.

The most important "Padavís," or titles, are—

Sen, Dás, Gupta.

The first belong to the Dhanvantarí and Ṣaktrí gotras, the second to the Madhu Kuliyá, and the third to the Kaṣyapa.

Baidyás wearing the Bráhmanical cord mourn fifteen days: those who do not for thirty. All old Baidyá families are Ṣákta worshippers, but among the poorer classes Vaishnavas are occasionally found. This caste has Ghaṭaks of its own, and formerly the Haḍa division of the Gauṇa Kulin Bráhmans acted in this capacity, but for many years past members of their own caste have officiated. This innovation originated with one Viṣvaratha of Jessore, who is reputed to have been the first legitimate Baidyá Ghaṭak.

Many of the caste have lately become Brahmos, and been excommunicated, until they can establish to the satisfaction of the Samáj-patí that the secession from Hindu belief and domestic usages has not been predetermined.

The practice of medicine is the proper profession of the Baidyá caste, but for many years it has sent forth young men who have distinguished themselves at the bar, and as agents, managers, and schoolmasters, whilst others have taken to the study of English medicine, and become Bengali class native doctors in the service of Government.

The Kabíráj, or medical practitioner according to the Hindu system, is found in almost every village of Eastern Bengal, and the most respected among them are generally Baidyás. Although it is the fashion to disparage this class, the educated among them are useful and deserving members of native society, occupying a position that cannot be more efficiently filled under present circumstances. The good that they do is rarely heard of, and the malpractices of the legion of uneducated quacks throughout Bengal are laid to their charge.

Kabírájs usually assume bombastic titles, such as Kabí-ratna, Kabí-sanjan, Kabí-chandra, Kabí-Indra, Kabí-bhúshaṇa Kabí-bullabha, and Baidyá-nidhí; but the popular nickname for all doctors is Náṛí-ṭepá, or pulse-feeler. Uneducated practioners and quacks are known as Háthuria,[1] or meddlesome fellows, from "háth," the hand; while a still more objectionable and dangerous character is the Ta'líqa Kabíráj, who goes about with a list (ta'líq) of prescriptions, selling them at random, and vaunting their virtues in curing all diseases. He is often a plucked student of the Calcutta College, or a young man too poor to prosecute his studies until qualified for graduation.

Formerly, medicine was taught in Páthsálas, or schools, the most famous being those of Bikrampúr and Kánchrapáṛá, on the Hughlí; but at the present day each practitioner of any reputation has a "ṭol," or class, of pupils to whom he translates and expounds the Ṣástras, if the youths understand Sanskrit, but if they do not he merely lectures on the principles and practice of Hindu medicine. A class generally consists of from ten to twelve young men of various Ṣúdra castes, and it is computed that about twelve per cent. of the Dacca Kabírájs are sufficiently versed in Sanskrit to interpret it.

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[1] Buchanan, iii, 142, derives this sobriquet from Hát, a market.

The two principal text books of the Bengal physicians are the Mádhava Nidána, or commentary on the Áyur-veda, and the Chakra-váṇí. The former, written by a celebrated doctor, Mádhava-Kara, chiefly treats of the diagnosis of diseases, while the latter, named after the writer, who was physician and steward of the court of Gauṛ, is a later and less valued work. Each Kabíraj has a particular master and system, but the greatest teacher, Dhanvantarí, the physician of the gods, is obeyed by all. In the Brahma-Vaivartta Puráṇa the names of fifteen great physicians are preserved, but only the following six are invoked by the modern doctor, namely:—

Dhanvantarí,
Divodasa,
Káṣi Rája,
Aṣvinau,
Nakúla,
Saha-deva.

The first three are often identified with one person, the fifth and sixth are the twin sons of Súrya, the physicians of Svarga, or heaven. On all occasions of anxiety Mahádeva, or Vaidya-nátha, "lord of physicians," is also addressed in prayer.

The chief causes of the stagnation of Hindu medicine, which has lasted from prehistoric times, appear to be the discontinuance of the study of anatomy, the belief that the medical Ṣástras, being of divine origin, are infallible, and the selfishness of successive generations of physicians in concealing the results of their experience and observation. Kabírájs of the present day often blindly follow the teaching of the Áyur-veda, notwithstanding the opinion that the habits and constitution of the human race, and the prevailing type of diseases, have altered since the archaic days of their teachers.

The candid physician confesses that his brethren have not the magnanimity to divulge the merits of a drug which chance, or experience, has taught them to value; and although it is revealed to a son, or favourite pupil, the secret is kept from the profession at large, and consequently is often lost at the death of the discoverer.

The real Baidyá always dispenses his own prescriptions, but as this consumes much time and necessitates his limiting the number of his patients, apprentices are employed in pounding and triturating drugs, while the minute subdivision into powders is done by himself in a private recess of the house. Before beginning this work, the Baidyá observes a custom, peculiar to physicians of his caste, namely, the worship of Vaịdya-nátha, after which the medicine is divided into four parts, one being offered to the Elements, a second to a Bráhman, a third being retained by the physician, and a fourth sent to the patient. As a rule drugs are procured from the shop of the Gandha-banik, or Pansárí, but in olden days the physician had to go himself to the forest and collect whatever herb he wanted, and the most successful Kabíráj now in the Dacca district refers his good fortune to the trouble he is at in gathering and verifying the genuineness of the drugs used.

The principal difference between the practice of one Kabíráj and another is, that the works of different commentators on the Áyur-veda are followed. The practice is thus modified, and often inconsistent, while all agree that the fundamental principles of medicine are unchangeable, and that the causes of disease are the same now as they were in Vedic days.

Consultations are usually held in difficult cases, but the physician who can quote the Ṣástras most fluently and interminably, is too often deemed the most learned and skilful doctor. Although the Ṣástras declare that physic given by the hands of a Baidyá has an intrinsic virtue not possessed when it is administered by any other caste, the populace have no such conviction, and as soon as the treatment of a Baidyá fails the patient has no hesitation in placing himself under any other doctor, whatever his caste, or colour, who has acquired the reputation of curing his particular ailment.

Kabírájs, who can afford to be so, are often charitable, giving advice gratis to the poor, and at times treating the sick in a room reserved for them. At the present day Kabírájs are preferred by all Hindus of the old school, as the minute attention paid to diet and temperament is in keeping with the popular ideas, and the way in which European doctors ignore, or disregard, matters so important is especially reprehended. In acute diseases the Kabíraj admits that the European physician far surpasses him in knowledge, but he claims to treat chronic and lingering diseases with greater success. It may be that in the obscurer effects of malaria, and in cachexiæ the consequence of blood poisoning, the medical treatment of the native practitioners is so very efficacious as to explain the greater reliance placed on it than on the routine practice followed in the dispensaries and hospitals throughout Bengal; but no competent person has thought it worth his while to confirm, or refute, a belief which is universally held by the natives of Bengal.

The present state of Hindu medicine in Eastern Bengal is sketched in the following particulars, obtained from the Kabírájs themselves.

Kábírájs believe that the human race has degenerated, and that the constitutions of the present generation have changed, and they cite as an instance the type of fever now prevalent, which is more acute and less tractable than the fevers described in the Ṣástras. In these works it is enjoined, that for seven days no medicines are to be given to a patient, and that he is to fast, or only take liquid food; but now, as soon as a diagnosis is formed, and a propitious hour found, the first dose is given. The examination of the pulse is regarded of primary importance, and many doctors are credited with being able to distinguish a disease by its character. The inspection of the urine is not considered, as it is by the Hakím, of much value, for should a drop touch the physician he becomes unclean, and must at once bathe. When it is inspected the sample is always mixed with mustard oil, and the density of the water estimated by the buoyancy of the oil.

Venesection is never performed at the present day, as the type of the ordinary diseases contra-indicates its use; but cupping or leeches are occasionally ordered. In apoplexy, and some forms of hysteria, the actual cautery is still employed, and the potential cautery (Kshára) is used for destroying piles, and, in a fine state of division, is made into an embrocation, and applied over the enlarged spleen and liver.

In the Ṣástras, enemata are recommended, but, whether, owing to the clumsy syringes employed, or to the strange aversion of all Muhammadan nations to their use, Hindu physicians ceased to order them. Kabírájs, however, are beginning to follow the example of English doctors, but much latent opposition is encountered.

Hindu physicians have arrived at the following conclusions regarding the most valued European drugs. Quinine, in extensive use throughout Bengal, is popularly regarded as a heating remedy, and as causing, when injudiciously used, the fever to take a permanent hold, or to return after a short interval. The masses further believe that it drives the fever into the bones, and that, if once taken, it prevents all other febrifuges from being of the slightest benefit. As a tonic, however, during convalescence from fever, it is admitted by all to be invaluable and unequalled.

With educated practitioners the use of mercury has quite gone out of fashion, and iodide of potassium taken its place; but the victims of its abuse are still lamentably common, and scarcely a hospital in Bengal is ever without several poor creatures permanently maimed, or disfigured by it.

English, or American, sarsaparilla is not much esteemed, as a "pát" of from nine to sixty ingredients is considered a better alterative. The patient being given twenty-one powders, made of a jumble of herbs, takes one daily and boils it in a ser of water until only a quarter remains, then straining and putting aside the sediment, he drinks the decoction. After the twenty-one days have expired, all the sediments are taken, reboiled, and the decoction drunk for eleven days longer. Finally, the sediment is put into boiling water, and with it the patient takes a vapour bath (Bhapárá).

Cod-liver oil is considered inferior as a nutrient tonic to divers pills and powders prepared by Kabírájs, and in consumption an oil, called "Sárchandanadí," made of Til oil and numerous herbs, is pronounced more beneficial.

Chicken broth, prohibited in health, is often prescribed in lingering diseases, while the good effects of port wine and brandy, in the treatment of low types of fever, are acknowledged.

Pills prepared at English druggists are objected to as the magnesia sprinkled over them interferes, it is thought, with the action of the medicine, consequently the Hindu pills rolled with the fingers, and mixed with honey, or the juice of the Belá, or Pân leaf, are preferred.

Such are the condition and opinions of the better class of native physicians, but the description would be incomplete if it omitted all allusion to the uneducated practitioner met with in every village of Bengal, who secures an extensive, and by no means unprofitable, practice among classes unable to pay for better medical advice. He is often a superannuated barber, or fisherman, who has obtained from some strolling "bairágí," or "faqír" a receipt to cure all diseases. The credulity of the average native is astounding, and even persons of education and high position display wonderful faith in the assertions of quacks vaunting the discovery of some new panacea. There is perhaps no single complaint which so often awakens the inventive faculty of such men as enlargement of the spleen, and he who acquires notoriety as the possessor of a remedy is courted by all classes. A very nutritious diet of milk, fish, and vegetables is always ordered by these shrewd observers, and is generally assigned by sceptics as the explanation of cures which they undoubtedly sometimes effect. The following instances are given in proof of the unsatisfactory appreciation of medicine by the lower classes of Bengal.

In March, 1874, a cloth merchant returned from Lucknow, cured by one 'Urf Husain, of an asthma of twenty-four years standing, and instructed how to cure all diseases, by spitting on and licking the seat of pain, and by rubbing wood ashes over the part. On his arrival in Dacca he exhibited his wonderful powers, which were the more readily believed as he demanded no remuneration, and was satisfied with the fame of his good actions. For weeks from fifty to a hundred patients daily thronged his courtyard, and rumours spread that the novel treatment had the most miraculous result in the most hopeless cases. After a short and prosperous career failures became so numerous, and the cures so very equivocal, that patients ceased to attend, his popularity waned, and the fickle people sought a new pretender.

Another amateur doctor, residing in the outskirts of Dacca, earned a more lasting reputation by using a vesicatory made with the root of the "Kálá-chítra," and applied over the spleen. He, however, assigned much of its efficacy to a secret invocation, addressed, in the act of applying the paste, to Lakhí Náráyaṇa. The Hindu, moreover, relies as much on the virtues of a cup of water, over which a mantra has been mumbled, as any Muhammadan peasant, and the water of the Ganges, water taken from a tidal river at the turn of the tide, or water in which the Gosáin has bathed, have each their crowd of admirers.

In Bengal, as in ancient Egypt and Greece, certain shrines are still celebrated for the cure of intractable diseases. The most famous are those of Tárá-Keṣvara in Hughli, sacred to Mahádeva; of Vaidyanátha in Bírbhúm; and of Gondulpáṛá in Hughli, famous in cases of hydrophobia. The device followed at the last place is for the bitten person, after fasting, to defray the expense of a special service, and to receive a piece of red broadcloth (Sulṭání banát), impregnated with the snuff of a lamp wick, and secreted in the heart of a plantain, called "Kathálí Kelá." As long as this charm is preserved, and the patient abstains from eating this variety of plantain, the effects of the bite are warded off.

With a people who think and act in this blind, irrational manner, any change to more sound and enlightened modes of thought must be slow. When we still find the lower classes of Scotch and Irish relying on the virtues of certain springs, and believing in the wondrous cures effected by them, we cannot hope that the Hindu will speedily relinquish his faith in miracles and his unreasoning acceptance of every imposture; but a great change is already in progress, and the spread of dispensaries, and of native doctors educated according to English ideas, is doing as much to advance the people, and to awaken among them self-reliance and healthy scepticism, as any other influence directed against the ignorance and credulity of the East.

BANPAR.

The Banpar, or Gauri (? Gonṛhí) Banpar, as they prefer calling themselves, belong to a caste of degraded fishermen and boatmen from Patna and Bihár. Buchanan considered them as a branch of the Koerí, dishonoured by becoming fishermen; but the tribe has sunk so much lower than any offshoot of a clean caste ever does, that it seems far more probable to assign them an aboriginal origin. In Bihár the Banpar, objecting to till the soil, live by fishing and trading. They are skilful sportsmen, entrapping the alligator (magar) and Ghaṛiyál in strong rope nets and eating their flesh. Although this is, according to Hindu ideas, a sufficient explanation of their low position, it is a curious circumstance that, like the Málo of Bengal, their being outcasted is referred to the peculiarity of passing the netting needle the wrong way, from above downwards, and not to any penchant for forbidden flesh.

BÁOTÍ, BÁITÍ.

In Bengal this small caste is usually called Chúnarí, or Chúniya, from being engaged in the manufacture of lime (Chúná), and is chiefly found on the borders of the large marshes in Bikrampúr. In the census rolls the Báití are returned along with the beggar and vagabond classes, and it is probable they are the same as the "Báoṛí," a vagrant tribe in the Gangetic delta and west of Delhi, who subsist chiefly by stealing.[1]

In Dacca they all belong to one gotra, the Aliman, but in the Farrídpúr district there is an outcaste Magí subdivision.

The Purohit is a Patit Bráhman, and the caste is mainly a Vaishnava one. The only titles met with are Ráí, Bhúya, and Sen.

The Báotí do not gather shells, but Bediyás occasionally do, and fishermen from the Murshídábad district come annually in March and April to collect them. The common swamp shells are almost useless, while a small univalve, called "Mojia," formerly found in abundance, and repaying the cost of burning, has become so scarce that it is now never sought after. The best fishing ground is the Kamargangá river in Farrídpur, and the only shells calcined by the Báotí are the "Ghonghá," "Sípí," and Shámuk, the molluscs (gíta) being extracted by an iron hook. A "*man*" (80 lbs) of shells, costing from fourteen to twenty anas, produces, when calcined, about four "*mans*" of lime, which sells for about an ana a seer (2 lbs). The Káthuria Sutárs are the only other class of Bengalis engaged in lime burning.

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[1] Wilson's "Glossary," p. 61.

Although the Báotí is one of the most impure of Bengali castes, their water vessels defiling any pure Hindu, no one will refuse to chew lime moistened with water from these very same vessels.

Kabírájs purchase unslaked lime (Gúra-chúná) from the Báotí for medicinal purposes, while the finest and most expensive lime for chewing, "Panka-Chúná," is prepared with the ashes of tamarind wood.

The Ṣúdra barber and washerman work for the Báotí, but the Bhúinmálí, owing to some party grudge, will not, and the Muhammadan Beldár has to be engaged whenever the Báotí has a house to build, or a ditch to dig.[1]

BAQQÁL.

This Arabic name for a grain merchant is a title assumed by a few Chaṇḍáls, who neither eat nor intermarry with the parent stock, although their Bráhman is the same. The Baqqáls are wandering traders who retail turmeric, bay-leaves, rice, ginger, and other condiments in inland villages and markets. They are chiefly met with in the Ja'farganj and Mánikganj parganas of Dacca. They will not cultivate the soil, but, possessing cargo boats of their own, navigate them without any hired servants. All belong to one gotra, the Kaṣyapa, and the majority follow the Kṛishna Mantra.

Having assumed a higher and more respectable position than the Chaṇḍáls, they have renounced the drinking of spirits and the eating of pork.

BARAÍ.

The Bengali caste of Hindus engaged in cultivating Pân is generally included among the Nava-Ṣákha, or nine clean castes. They are closely allied to Ṣúdra Káyasths, with whom they eat and drink. The ordinary name among the lower classes for a cultivator of pân is 'Lata-baidyá, a "doctor of creepers."

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[1] Báori, Bawari, Bhourie, are the names of a migratory tribe found throughout India, probably the same as the Barbara, or Varvara of Sanskrit works. In central India they are also known as Haran Shikárí and Haranpardí, "J. A. S. B." of Bengal, xiii, 5.

In Bengal there are 156,807 persons belonging to the Baraí caste, fifty three per cent. of whom are distributed in the eastern districts as follows:—Dacca 15,931, Silhet 15,036, Báqirganj 14,453, Tipperah 8,982, Chittagong 12,448, Mymensingh 6,435, Farrídpúr 6,120, Noakhally 3,485, and Cachar 692.

The "Padavís," or titles, of the caste are very numerous, and their gotras are uncertain. The following list was furnished by the caste Bráhman:—

Padaví.	Gotra.
Dutta	Vishnumásí, Aliman.
Sen	Kaṣyapa.
Mitra	Karnamásí.
Bawál	Ṣáṇḍilya.
Khor	Aliman, Gotromásí.
Dás	Kaṣyapa, Aliman.
Pál	Aliman, Vishnumásí.
Nandí	Jaintimásí, Madhu Kuliya.
Mantianí	Vishnumásí.
Chand	Chandramásí.
Ásh.	
Kundú.	
Náha.	
Rukhít.	
Deo.	

The most common honorary titles are Chaudharí, Biṣwas, and Majumdár. Their Bráhman and servants are the same as those of the Káyasths. Towards Mymensingh, beyond the limits of the Ballálí country, the poorer members are found cultivating the soil, an occupation abhorrent to the Bikrampúr Baraí.

Along the banks of the Lakhya the Baraís celebrate, without a Bráhman, the "Nauamí" Pújah in honour of Ushas, a Vedic goddess, identical with the Eôs of Grecian mythology, on the ninth of the waxing moon in Asín (September-October). Plantains, sugar, rice, and sweetmeats are placed in the centre of the pân-garden, from which the worshippers retire, but after a little return, and carrying out the offerings distribute them among the village children. In Bikrampúr the deity invoked on the above date is Sungáí, one of the many forms of Bhágavatí. The reason given by the Baraís for not engaging the services of a Bráhman is the following: A Bráhman was the first cultivator of the Pân (Piper betle).[1] Through neglect, the plant grew so high that he used his "poitá" to fasten its tendrils, but as the plant shot up faster than he could supply thread, its charge was given to a Káyasth. Hence it is that a Bráhman cannot enter a pân-garden without defilement.

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[1] Pân is the Sanskrit parṇa, a leaf; while betle is a corruption of Víṭi, or Víṭika, the betle plant.

The pân-garden (Bara-Barej) is regarded as an almost sacred spot. Its greatest length is always north and south, while the entrances must be east and west. The enclosure, generally eight feet high, is supported by "Hijul"[1] trees, or betle-nut palms. The former are cut down periodically, but the palms are allowed to grow, as they cast little shade, and add materially to the profits of the garden. The sides are closely matted with reeds, jute stalks, or leaves of the date, or Palmyra palm, while "Nal" grass is often grown outside to protect the interior from wind and the sun's rays. The top is not so carefully covered in, wisps of grass being merely tied along the trellis work over the plants. A sloping footpath leads down the centre of the enclosure towards which the furrows between the plants trend, and serves to drain off rain as it falls, it being essential for the healthy growth of the plant that the ground be kept dry.

The pân plant is propagated by cuttings, and the only manures used are "Pák-maṭí," or decomposed vegetable mould excavated from tanks, and "Kalí," the refuse of oil mills. The plant being a fast growing one, its shoots are loosely tied with grass to upright poles, while thrice a year it is drawn down and coiled at the root. As a low temperature injures the plant by discolouring the leaves, special care must be taken during the cold season that the inclosure and its valuable contents are properly sheltered. Against vermin no trouble is required, as caterpillars and insects avoid the plant on account of its pungency. Weeds are carefully eradicated, but certain culinary vegetables such as pepper, varieties of pumpkins, and cucumbers, "palwal," and "baigan" (egg-plant), are permitted to be grown. Pân leaves are plucked throughout the year, but in July and August are most abundant, and therefore cheapest; while a garden if properly looked after continues productive from five to ten years. Four pân leaves make one Gaṇḍa, and the Bíṛa, or measure by which they are sold, nowadays equals in Eastern Bengal twenty Gaṇḍas, although formerly it equalled twenty-four.[2] Pân leaves are never vended by the Baraí himself, but are sold wholesale to agents (Paikárs), or directly to the pân sellers.

The varieties of the Piper betle are numerous, but it is probable that in different districts distinct names are given to the same species. The "Kafúrí," or camphor-scented pân, allowed by all natives to be the most delicately flavoured, is only grown at Sunnárgaon for export to Calcutta, where it fetches a fancy price. The next best is the "Sanchí," which often sells for four anas a Bíṛa. The commoner sorts are the "Desí," "Bangala," "Bháṭiál," "Dhál-dogga," and a very large leaved variety called "Bubná." The usual market price of the inferior kinds is from one to two paisa a bíṛa.

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[1] Sanskrit Ijjala (*Barringtonia acutangula*).

[2] In the "Bháṭí" country (Báqirganj), thirty-six Gaṇḍas equal one Bíṛa.

It has been mentioned that the "Bara" is regarded as almost sacred, and the superstitious practices in vogue resemble those of the silk worm breeder. The Baraí will not enter it until he has bathed and washed his clothes, while the low caste man employed in digging is required to bathe before he commences work. Animals found inside are driven out, while women ceremonially unclean dare not enter within the gate. A Bráhman never sets foot inside, and old men have the presentiment that on entering the same injury will befall them as is supposed will happen if they pass under the washerman's clothes line, or the trellis on which gourds are trained. It is frequently insinuated, however, that the village lovers often whisper beneath its shade; but, possibly this is merely idle gossip.

At the present day individuals belonging to the Dhobá, Chanḍál, and Sáha castes, as well as Muhammadans, manage pân-gardens, but they impiously omit the ceremonies necessary for preserving the Bara clean and unpolluted.

BATTÍ-WÁLAH.

The usual candlemakers are Ghulám Káyaths, who are also retailers of pân.

Bee's-wax is boiled and poured into cold water, then reboiled and run into moulds. Coloured wax candles are rarely fancied by natives, but those required for the services of the Roman Catholic church are always tinged pale yellow.

BEDIYÁ.

In every province of India bands of vagrants, vaguely styled Nat, Kanjar, Brajbásí, or Banjára, are met with, who correspond to the gipsies of Europe, and bear a striking resemblance to one another. In the delta of the Ganges, boats being the only means of conveyance, the nomadic tribes move about in vessels which vary in build according to the particular division. In Bengal these vagrants are generically known as Bediyá, from the Sanskrit Vyádha, a hunter. Each division (bahr) has its route fixed beforehand by a Nardár, or Murabbí, who resides in a central locality within easy reach. He promotes the general interests of the tribe, selects the boats which are to form the fleet, appoints a director to each party, and punishes any disobedience, such as leaving the fleet and joining another. He settles all disputes, and if any serious difference occurs, takes evidence and delivers judgment. Fees are paid to him at marriages, and presents of clothes are given on other festive occasions.

Once every year the different tribes of Bediyás meet to consult, to celebrate marriages, and to lay in a supply of goods for retail during the ensuing year. On the full moon of Kártik (Nov.-Dec.) Hindus bathe at the old junction of the Brahmaputra and Ganges. Afterwards a fair, lasting a month, and known as the Váruṇi Mela, is held, to which traders from all parts of Bengal, and Upper India, resort. At it the merchants of Dacca, Silhet, Tipperah, and Mymensingh, buy their annual stock of merchandise, and hither come the Bediyás to replenish their stores. Each fleet brings its own Nardár, but when all have united one supreme head is elected, who directs the affairs of the whole tribe as long as it remains together.

The Bediyás have unfortunately given up most of their old customs, and been transformed within the last fifty years into uninteresting, and prosaic, Muhammadans. The Farazi Maulavís practising on their credulity, have made out that these wanderers are really the descendants of Núh Nabí, or Noah, who being a Bediyá, lived in a big boat with all his family !

At the annual gathering a Maulaví is always present to instruct his disciples, to teach the boys to pray, to perform marriage services, and to superintend the rite of circumcision. Although he wields much influence, the Maulaví is unable to wean the Bediyá from all his old Hindu superstitions; red lead (Sindúr) is still his symbol of marriage, and of married life, and the "Marocha," or four plantain trees, is the altar at which alone the marriage ceremony can be properly performed. Many women continue to tattoo the forehead like their Hindu sisters, and all classes invoke Manasa Devi, and engage Bráhmans to perform "pújah" to a particular deity in times of sickness.

The Bediyás of the present day are as reserved as the Nat and Kanjar of Hindustan, and rarely talk freely to strangers. They still understand Hindustání, and sing Hindustání songs, but they converse in Bengali with the villagers, and in an

Argot, or cant, language with their own people. The Bediyás and Nats mutually disclaim any relationship, but now and then the tall muscular figures, and unmistakeable features of the true Nat, or gypsy, are seen among the Bediyás, and when such persons are appealed to, they confess that either they, or their forefathers, came from Upper India. The Bediyá, however, is so cunning and so clever at giving answers to stop further enquiry, that what he says must be received with caution. Nevertheless, we know that early in this century the gypsies of Bengal followed the customs of their ancestors in the north-west, and had not in mass become converts to Islám. They regarded religion with indifference, and if a deity was worshipped in private, he was in public discarded for any idol or god adored by the villagers around.

Like the gypsies in all lands, the Bediyá carries in his features the stamp of a peculiar race, and from exposure to heat, glare, and privations, he is tanned of a darker brown than the Bengali artizan, and vies in swarthiness with the fisher Kaibartta, and rustic Chaṇḍál. It is rare to find a pretty girl or a handsome man, but the prevalent countenance is characteristic, and quite different from the usual Bengali cast of features. The profile is generally fine, the nose being straight, narrow, and often aquiline. The forehead is broad, sometimes intellectual. The figure is short, and the limbs less sinewy and graceful than among gypsies. The elders become corpulent, and rarely live to a green old age. Hard work and child-bearing soon efface the beauty of the young women, who are wrinkled hags at thirty. Men and women dress like ordinary Muhammadans, having laid aside the jackets and petticoats formerly worn. The men are remarkably lazy, and may often be seen enjoying a siesta, or a pipe, while the wife with a babe at her side is rowing, or punting the boat. The Bediyá boat never carries a sail, and as a rule there is only one rowlock, consequently only one person pulls at a time. Still this hard working, patient woman, is an affectionate wife, a sympathising and indulgent mother, who, without a thought for herself, devotes her whole time and attention to the recovery of a sick child, or fever-stricken husband. In the hospital at Dacca, the devotion of these women often excites admiration and respect, as they, with few exceptions, are the women who most frequently accompany their sick relatives, and, regardless of the depressing effects of a hospital ward, sit by their bedsides day and night, anticipating wants, and calming the restless patient.

The Bediyás, like their kinsfolk the gypsies, are often charged with being thieves, and whenever a robbery is committed near a Bediyá fleet, they are suspected. This evil reputation, however, is often taken advantage of by professional thieves, who trust to escape detection by casting suspicion on the Bediyá.

Various attempts have been made to wean the Bediyá from his unsettled habits, but only with partial success. Until the interior of the country is opened up by roads, the wandering trader will be welcomed, and his goods find a ready sale. At present his movements are uncertain, depending on the state of the rivers, and when the creeks get dry, the fleets disperse to suitable places, where a piece of land on the bank of a river is rented, a tent pitched, and the boats hauled on shore, and repaired. This encampment is occupied till the end of May, when the periodic rains enable them to set out on their annual circuit. Although the mass of Bediyás lead this life, a few go to other districts to collect shells, while those of settled habits return to their home, and cultivate land like the peasantry.

The boats of each Bediyá subdivision differ in some respects from all others, and by this difference can be distinguished at a distance. The boats of the Sámperia have the bow and stern raised, while those of the Shándárs are horizontal. The "Chhapar," or tilt, of boats belonging to the Mál, Sámperia, and Bázígar, is fastened outside the gunwale, while those of the Ba-bajiyá and Shándár are fastened inside, with mats hung outside to prevent water entering. The boats of the Gáyan again are merely canoes with raised wooden bulwarks, and an opening towards the stern. The roofs of all Bediyá boats are rounded, tapering towards one or both ends, and except in the case of the Gáyan, having two openings, one towards the bow, the other towards the stern.

Under the Muhammadan government, there was an officer who kept a register of all the tribes of wandering musicians and performers; according to some authorities they varied in number from eighteen to thirty-two sets. A tax, known as "Chandína Damdári," or "Bajantarí," was levied on them, being included under the head of "Sáir," or miscellaneous imposts. For the year 1777–8, the collection for the Dacca division, including Mymensingh and Silhet, amounted to rupees 2,761. 4. 0; namely, Damdárí, rupees 821. 4. 0; and Bajantarí, rupees 1,940. 1. 8. At a still earlier date the aggregate of the two taxes amounted to rupees 4,500 a-year.

The following are the seven divisions of Bediyás in Eastern Bengal:—

(*a*) Ba-bajiya,
(*b*) Bází-gar,
(*c*) Mál,
(*d*) Mír-shikár,
(*e*) Sámperia,
(*f*) Shándár,
(*g*) Rasia.

(*a.*) BA-BAJIYA.

The origin of this name is disputed, but it is probably derived from the Sanskrit Baṇijya, or Baṇij, trade. By their kinsmen they are called Lava and Paṭwa, the former in Sanskrit meaning a section, the latter a derivative of Paṭa, a screen.

The Ba-bajiya are pedlars. Their wares are very miscellaneous, consisting of gaudily painted wooden bracelets, waist-cords, tape, brass finger rings, nose rings, glass beads, wooden cups for oil, playing cards, looking glasses, sandal wood chains, and fish-hooks. They make voyages to Silhet, bringing back shells for lime, and pearls used in native medicine. Few sportsmen are bolder divers, and none excel them in spearing fish, especially mullet, with the harpoon.

The Ba-bajiya keep dancing monkeys, and, like the Bázígars, teach their daughters acrobatic feats; while adults perform tricks of legerdemain with all the mysterious flourishes, and fluent talk, of the wizard tribe.

Though assuming to be Muhammadans, they chaunt songs in honour of Ráma and Lakshmaṇa, and exhibit painted canvas scrolls, representing the redoubtable deeds of Ráma and Rávaṇa, and the exploits of Hanuman.

The women have the reputation of being skilful in the treatment of infantile diseases, and in the removal of nervous and rheumatic pains. They occasionally tattoo, but are not so expert as the Natní.

(*b.*) BÁZÍ-GAR.

The Bází-gar is generally called by Bengali villagers Kabútarí, from his tumbling like a pigeon (Kabútar), or Bhánu-matí, from the daughter of Vikramáditya of Ujjayana, the first person, according to Hindu tradition, who practised jugglery and conjuring. Another familiar name is Ḍorá-báz, or rope dancer.

The Bází-gar women and girls are the principal performers; the men play tricks with balls and knives. The girls are very supple, twisting and bending their bodies into most bewildering figures. One of the ordinary feats is fastening a buffalo's horn in front, climbing to the top of a pole on which a board is fixed, and resting on the point of the horn, spinning round at a rapid and giddy pace.

The women dabble in medicine, and prescribe for children ill with fever, or indigestion. A favourite remedy for the latter is the juice of the "Sem," or flat bean, mixed with lime made of the common shell, called Ṣambúka. They are also cunning rubbers for rheumatism, and dexterous curers of toothache.

In Dacca the Bází-gars rarely live ashore, but in Farrídpúr they have become cultivators, and are being rapidly absorbed into the village population. These families are very thrifty, purchasing standing crops and disposing of them at a profit, or leasing a grove of date palms, and making money by the sugar extracted.

In physique the Bází-gars resemble the Nats and Kanjars of Hindustán, and they often admit that their immediate ancestors came from Gházípúr, or Upper India.

(*c.*) MÁL.

The name Mál is derived from the Sanskrit Mála, a hillman, but according to their own account they were wrestlers (Malla) at the court of the Dacca Nawábs, and gained the name from this profession. From their dexterity in extracting worms from teeth, the nickname Ponkwah is often given.

Notwithstanding their roving habits, peculiar physiognomy, and characteristic figures, the Máls repudiate any connection with the Bediyás, but neighbours can recollect when relationship was readily admitted. At present Máls are with difficulty recognised. As a rule they are Maháajans, or bankers, never dealing in pedlar's wares, but advancing small sums on loan, rarely exceeding eight rupees, and on good security. The rate of interest charged is usually about fifty per. cent. per annum, but this exorbitant demand is less than that exacted by town bankers. The borrower has also to pay the writer of the bond a fee, called Tahríri, calculated at the rate of two paisa for each rupee.

The Dacca Máls never keep snakes, and know nothing about the treatment of their bites. The women, however, pretend to a secret knowledge of simples, and of wild plants. They are also employed for cupping, for relieving obscure abdominal pains by friction, and for treating uterine diseases; but never for tattooing.

Mals do not intermarry with other Bediyás, or with Muhammadan villagers, and if a stranger asks in marriage a Mál maiden, he must leave his paternal home, relinquish his calling, and adopt the life and habits of a Bediyá. This custom, formerly insisted on by all Bediyás, has been gradually given up by families realizing the advantages of settled life, but its general disuse is still resented by the older members.

(*d.*) MÍR-SHIKÁR.

The Mír-Shikár, or Chirí-már, the smallest subdivision of

Bediyás, only musters some hundred boats. They capture singing birds, "Bulbuls," and parrots with birdlime and the Sátnalí rod, or with nooses of horse-hair. Formerly game was killed with arrows, but these antiquated weapons have given place to the Mungír fowling piece.

The following animals captured by these hunters are sold for medicinal purposes, or for charms.

Ban-rahu, Manis, or scaly anteater. If bound on the arm its scales are reputed to cure palpitations of the heart.

Mahokha, or Pán-Korí, the common crow pheasant of India. Killed on a Tuesday or Saturday, its flesh cures enlargement of the spleen, and puerperal disorders.

Penchá, the spotted owlet of Jerdon. Its claws and droppings, pounded with betel-nut, are, according to Muhammadans, a very powerful and certain philtre.

Dáuk (*Gallinula phœnicura*). When dried its flesh is highly beneficial in rheumatism.

(*e.*) SÁMPERIA.

The Sámperia are the snake charmers of Bengal, who, like other Bediyás, huckster miscellaneous goods in the villages of the interior, and manufacture fish-hooks and such like articles.

The snakes usually exhibited are the Jáit,[1] or cobra; the light and dark varieties of the Ophiophagus Elaps, named by them Dudh-ráj and Mani-raj; the python; a beautiful whip snake, with red, black, and yellow spots, called "Udaya Sámp;" and a large brown snake with black stripes on its neck, known as "Ghár-bánká," from the singular way it bends before striking.

These snakes are caught in the forest. When one is seen the Sámperia pursues, and pins it to the ground with a forked stick. He then rapidly glides his hand along, and fixes his thumb over the first vertebra, the animal being rendered quite helpless. If the snake be a poisonous one, the fangs are barbarously torn out, but the poison "bag," the most profitable product of his dangerous trade, is carefully preserved. Snake poison is highly valued by Hindu physicians, being used in the treatment of diseases, and fetching in the market from fifteen to sixteen rupees a "bhari."[2]

Another valuable prize is the tick (Kilní), occasionally found on the hood of the black cobra, about which the most fabulous stories are told. One of these parasites fetches a large sum of money, as it is popularly believed to be a certain preservative against snake bites, and poisons in general.[1]

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[1] The common name for the Cobra de Capello is "Gohmaná," or "Gokhrá.' In Sanskrit it is "Kṛishna-Sarpa."

[2] A "bhari," or Sicca rupee, equals 179 grains.

The cobra does not feed on snakes, but the Ophiophagus, as its name indicates, does. The Sámperia feeds his menagerie on fish, frogs, and mice. Domesticated snakes, with the exception of the python, rarely live more than five months in captivity, and never breed. Incredible as it may seem, snake charmers assert that all kinds cast their slough once a month. In a wild state this occurs once a year.

Sámperias have no specific for snake bite, but each man carries, as a charm, the root of the "Bhatráj," a forest creeper, but the specimen shown by one was a twig of the common wild vine (*Vitis Indica*). The popular belief is that the bud (málatí) of the "Bhatráj" is a specific, but the Sámperia deny this. When any one is bitten by a poisonous animal, the Sámperia follows a rational treatment. He ties a string round the limb, sucks the wound, bathes the extremity in hot water, and covers the bite with the leaves of the "Bhatráj." One of the company then recites Hindustání mantras, or incantations, which are usually utter gibberish.

The Sámperia are in great request for the due performance of the Manasa Devi festival, in the month of Srávan (July-Aug.), being engaged by Bráhmans to exhibit their collection, and make the snakes crawl in front of the idol. Manasa Devi still maintains her position as the patron deity of Sámperias, and no Mulla has as yet dared to cast her down from her pedestal.

When snakes are exhibited the Sámperia plays on a pipe, while his wife, or child, chaunts a monotonous Hindustání song, and irritates the reptile to strike by threats and shouts.

The Sámperia is also a sportsman. He tames jungle cocks to entrap wild ones, and the "Kora" (*Gallicrex cristatus*), a bird famous for its pugnacity. When he is in want of food he tethers it near a marsh, arranging a low screen with three movable leaves from which horse-hair nooses hang. The wild bird advancing to test the courage of his captive brother, gets entangled, and falls an easy prey to the Bediyá who is lying concealed in the brushwood.

The Sámperias, like other Bediyás, keep tame cormorants to drive fish into the net, for he is a great fisherman, although he never sells what he catches. When moored near a jungle he stalks deer, and shoots partridges, paddy-birds and egrets.

(*f.*) SHÁNDÁR.

This is the most orderly and industrious of the Bediyá divisions. Many have settled in Dayáganj, a suburb of Dacca, but others live in boats. Their name is derived from the Persian Shánah, a comb, corrupted into Hánah by the Bengalis. This comb, or more correctly reed, through which the warp threads pass, is in great demand by Tántís, and Juláhas, for their looms, as no other workmen can make them so cheaply and artistically. The framework of the comb (dhangi), is made of split bamboo, and the teeth (gaibi) of well seasoned wood from Kachár. The latter are fixed at equal distances apart by strong cotton thread. The sale of these combs obliges the Shándárs to visit villages where weavers reside, and Dacca where the Tántís work. This intercourse with the working classes has civilised them.

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[1] Regarding the Sarpa-mani, Gara-mani, "snake gem," or carbuncle of romance writers, see "Asiatic Researches," xiii, 317–328.

The Shándár, however, follows other trades. Like gypsies he is a "Manihár," or pedlar, buying beads and trinkets; making neck bands; purchasing waist-strings (Kardhaní) from the Paṭwá; and needles, thread, and tape, from the Mughuliyá shop; which are retailed in the villages.

The Shándárs are also expert divers, and, when anchored in suitable localities, gather the common bivalve shells (sípí), and sell them to the Chunarí, or lime burner. They also use the Sát-nali, or bamboo rod of seven joints, tipped with birdlime, catching "bulbuls," and other small birds. Like the Sámperia they keep tame "Koras," jungle cocks, and cormorants, and, if able, take out a gun license to shoot game.

Shándárs form the largest division of the Bediyás, often associating with the other septs, but never in a friendly manner. They have all become Muhammadans, wearing the skull cap and dress of the villagers, from whom they cannot be distinguished. As a rule Shándárs are short, muscular men, more communicative, and less suspicious of strangers, than the ordinary Bengali peasant. Many of the race peculiarities have been lost, but Muhammadans banish them from society, and refuse to intermarry, to eat, and to pray with them. They seldom speak, or understand, Hindustání, and Bengali is the spoken language.

A class called Gáyan, literally a singer, has separated from the Shándár, but is already disappearing in the ranks of the village Muhammadans. The Gáyan, instructed by teachers, believe they are descended from Jihád Gáyan, who accompanied Sháh Jalál in his conquest of Silhet, and state that they emigrated from that country in covered canoes, differing in build from those inhabited by other Bediyás.

The Gáyan is usually a peasant, and when absent from home the wife watches the crops and tends the cattle. Any relationship with other Bediyás is warmly repudiated, for which reason the Farazí sect sometimes concedes to them the rights and privileges of other Mussulmáns, and this concession has transformed these vagrants into rigid Puritans. The Gáyan women are secluded, and the other Bediyás are reproached for indelicacy in allowing the women to wander about unveiled and unprotected.

The Gáyan sing Bengali songs in public, and the musical instruments in use are the violins, called "Sárangí" and "Behlá."

(*g*.) Rasia.

A few gangs of this subdivision are now and then met with in Dacca, but they are more numerous in Pubna. Their boats are of curious construction, being only half covered over, while the tilt is cocoon, or bottle-shaped, tapering gradually towards the stern, where there is a small round opening through which a man can with difficulty crawl. These Bediyás work with zinc, which is bought in pigs, melted, and run into moulds. From the similarity in colour of zinc and mercury (Rasa), the division has derived its distinctive name from the latter metal.

The Rasias make anklets, bracelets, and collars for the neck (hanslí), which are worn by all Hindu and Muhammadan females of the lower orders.

At their homes the Rasias are cultivators, and having completely amalgamated with the village Muhammadans are strict Farazís. Their standing, however, is so precarious, that prolonged absence from home, or a manifest partiality for boat life, is punished by expulsion from society.

When afloat the Rasia shows the same fondness for animals as other Bediyás, keeping a caged "Mainá," or "Kaim" (purple coot), for amusement or sport; while cocks and hens wander at will throughout the boat.

BEṚUA.

The Beṛua, or Pátr-Beṛua, caste is an offshot of the Chaṇḍál tribe, with the members of which they still eat and drink, but do not intermarry. Their name is derived from the Hindi Beṛá, a raft of bamboos or reeds, used for catching mullet. It is the well known habit of this fish to jump over any obstacle it meets with in water. The Beṛuas at full tide throw a screen across a creek, and on the surface of the water below it they moor another. As soon as the mullet encounters the first and finds no opening, it leaps over and is caught on the second. The fish are sold in the market, but no Beṛua will cast a net, or earn a livelihood as the Kaibarttas do.

In Dacca the Beṛuas occupy about five hundred houses, and are generally cultivators. The headman is called Pátr,[1] and the whole caste belongs to one gotra, the Kaṣyapa. The connection with the Chanḍál tribe is so intimate that the same Purohit officiates for both.

BHÚINHÁR BRÁHMANS.

A considerable number of these cultivating Bráhmans, of doubtful parentage, reside in Eastern Bengal, acting as policemen, clubmen (láṭhíal), or watchmen. They generally come from Gorakhpúr, or Ghazípúr, and after an absence of a few years return to their homes and families in Hindustan.

The popular idea is, that the Bhúinhárs are descended from a Bráhman father and a Kahár woman, but this origin would give them no right to the rank of Bráhman. The story told by themselves of their degradation is as follows. Bhoja Rájah of Bhojpúr, a great wizard, prepared a feast for the Bráhmans, but none attended, so he sent for Bhṛigu Ṛishí, then residing at Hájípúr in the Chapra district, who also disobeyed the summons on the plea of being engaged in preparing his fields for sowing. Owing to their cultivating land, as their ancestor did, his descendants have been degraded, never having any "jajmán," or clients, never accepting alms, and never eating or drinking with any other Bráhmanical order.

Their Guru is always a Kanaujiya: their Purohit a Sarvaria Bráhman.

They affirm that Rájputs make obeisance to them, and in return receive benediction. The Bengali Bráhmans again, refuse to eat rice, but partake of púrí (buttered scones), sweetmeats, and "khichṛí" prepared by them.

Among themselves the designations Bhúinhár, Gautam, and Ṭhákúr are regarded as synonymous; but the ordinary titles are Rái, Singh, Pánḍe, Tiwárí, and Chaube; whilst Rájah, and Mahárájah appellations discarded by all the higher orders, are not infrequent.

BHÚÍNMÁLÍ.

The Bhúínmálí is identical with the Háṛí of other parts of Bengal, and in Dinájpúr the names are used synonymously, while the caste is generally considered as the remnant of a Hinduized aboriginal tribe which was driven into Bengal by the Aryans, or the persecuting Muhammadans.

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[1] Pátra, a competent person.

In Eastern Bengal he is sometimes called "Siddhí-putra," after a Muní of that name. In the Census Rolls of 1872 the Bhúínmálí and Hárí are entered under separate headings among semi-Hinduized aborigines. There has evidently been a difference of opinion among returning officers on this point, for in Dacca 1,954 Hárís are returned, although a prolonged search in all corners of the district has failed to discover any persons acknowledging that designation, and 7,267 Bhúínmálís, an aggregate below the actual number. Next to Dacca the districts with the largest settlements are Tipperah (5,522), Rangpúr (3,771), Maldah (2,109), Noakhally (1,943), Farrídpúr (1,836), and Silhet (1,825).

The Dacca Bhúínmálís assert that they were originally Ṣúdras degraded in consequence of the following absurd incident: Párvatí obtained permission from her husband, Ṣiv, to give a feast to her worshippers on earth. All castes were assembled at the entertainment, and in the midst of the enjoyment a luckless Bhúínmálí was overheard saying, "If I had such a beautiful woman in my house, I would cheerfully perform the most menial offices for her." Ṣiv did not allow the speaker to retract what he had said, but gave him a beautiful wife and made him her sweeper. In confirmation of this legend a Bengali proverb defines the Bhúínmálí as the only Hindu ever degraded for love of garbage.

The Bhúínmálí caste has two great subdivisions, the Baṛá-bhágiyá and Chhotá-bhágiyá, who never intermarry, or hold social intercourse with each other. The former are chiefly cultivators, musicians, and palkí bearers; the latter scavengers, looking down with contempt on the Dôm, Mihtar, and Halál-khors, who, after work, enter their houses without bathing, and allow their females to labour at the same offensive trade.

At Saráíl, in Tipperah, Bhúínmálís keep swine, but these recreants are not acknowledged as brethren. In certain villages the Bhúínmálí has ceased to be a professional musician and become a chaukídár, or watchman. No member of the caste ever keeps a shop, as he would have no customers, and never trades, as he has no capital.

A large section of the Bhúínmálí caste is known as Mitra Sení Beháras, tracing their descent from Mitra Sen, the reputed son, or relative, of Ballál Sen, and claiming to be the original bearers of Bengal. They cultivate the soil, and are in great request as household servants by Hindu families. Although the same Bráhman officiates, the cultivating Bará-bhágiyá despises the cultivating Mitra Sení, and declines to eat with them. These palanquin bearers, again, will not carry torches, and look down upon those who do.

Although the caste has split up into divisions, the Bhúínmálí is properly one of the village servants, employed in cutting down brushwood, repairing footpaths, sweeping the outside of the Zamíndár's house, removing carcasses from the village, and preparing the "Marocha," or marriage area, for doing which he receives one rupee, if the marriage is that of a village boy, and eight anas if that of a girl. He is likewise the Mash'alchí engaged to carry the torch at Hindu weddings. A Bhúínmálí sweeper never enters a Hindu house to pollute it; but a maiden, called Dásí, or Chhokrí, is employed to sweep the floors of rooms and passages.

The Bhúínmálí also levels the space where the Ṣráddha is held, constructs the small shed in which the votive offerings are placed, and, when a sacrifice is to be made, smears the ground with cowdung. If the victim is killed in the morning the flesh is distributed among Bráhmans and clean Ṣúdras; but if it is a Sandhyá, or evening sacrifice, everything, including the cloth by which the animal is bound, becomes the perquisite of the Bhúínmálí.

The Bhúínmálí, besides, prepares and plasters the mound on which the Vastú Pujah is celebrated, receiving the ram as his remuneration, and, whenever a new house is built, he smears cowdung over the sides only, as he would lose caste if he touched the interior. Hindus of all castes smear the inside and steps of their own houses, but never those of others. The Bhúínmálí is the only native who will bedaub a strange house.

The gotras among the Bhúínmálí of Dacca are Paráṣara and Aliman, the latter being only found along the banks of the old Bráhmaputra. The caste has a degraded Bráhman as Purohit, and the washerman and barber are members of the caste. The Bhúínmálí generally worship Kṛishna, and celebrate all the popular Hindu festivals. Along the Lakhya "Káwaj," who is probably the same as Kwájah Khizr, is invoked, as is also Pír Badr. Like the Hindu and Muhammadan peasantry generally, the Bhúínmálí abstains from work during the three days known as "Ambuváchí," which last from the tenth to the thirteenth of the waning moon of Ásáṛh (June–July) when the earth is believed to be impure, and no Hindu can dig, plough, or even touch it.

Although most anxious to represent themselves as Ṣúdras, by apeing the prejudices of the higher ranks, the Bhúínmálí are contemned, and obliged to live on the outskirts of villages apart from the Hindus, and to perform any menial work that is required of them. Like other low castes the Bhúínmálí nowadays shudders at the idea of eating pork, although it is within the recollection of men still living, that he was very partial to it. Until the last twenty years he was very friendly with the Chaṇḍál, interchanging visits, and often dining with him, but lately an estrangement has parted them, and the Bhúínmálí treats his former friend as an inferior being, declining to eat with or even work for him. It is difficult to understand the cause of this coldness which has sprung up, but it was probably the result of a vague assertion of superiority on the part of one or other. The Bhúínmálí still works for many castes as low as the Chaṇḍál, and does not feel dishonoured by labouring for the Doí, or the Muhammadan peasant, although he does by toiling for the Jogí weaver.

It is at Hindu weddings that the Bhúínmálí musicians are engaged, creating a most horrid noise with their pipe (sarnáe), and drum (ḍhakká); but a feeling among them indicates that before long musicians will be expelled from the genteel classes. Widows never remarry, but a few years ago it was the universal custom. The Bhúínmálí female is now and then employed as a midwife, or a domestic servant. She is ceremonially unclean for thirty days after parturition as with Ṣúdras, but it is a curious circumstance that the "Chhaṭhí" ceremony is performed on the ninth day, and not on the sixth, as the word signifies.

BIND, BHIND, BINDU.

The Bind is a semi-Hinduized aboriginal race, widely scattered throughout India. Buchanan was of opinion that Oudh was their original home, but at the present day they are dispersed throughout the north-western provinces, Oudh, and the Gangetic valley. In 1865[1] it was computed that the Bind caste numbered 63,501 individuals in the north-western provinces, and in 1872 the census returns show a total of 10,563 in Bengal, of whom 6,002 belonged to Maldah, 1,100 to Pubna, 1,017 to Nadiyá, and only 153 to Dacca. Settlements of Binds are, however, found along the left bank of the Padma, but less frequently than on the right, or Farrídpúr, side. Originally residents of the Benares district, they were driven by the great famine of 1770 to seek shelter in the fertile delta, which has ever since been their home.

It is extremely doubtful if the Ben of Oudh, generally a musician, is the same as Bin of Arrah, who works as a Beldár, and manufactures saltpetre. In Bhágalpúr the Binds, or Beldárs, as they are usually called, fish, dig, cultivate the soil, hunt, and act as drug collectors. Mr. Sherring,[1] on the other hand, classifies the Bind, or Bin, with the Núniya caste. In Dacca, again, the Bind recognize three subdivisions, Jutaut Binds, Nún Binds, and Bin. The first is the most aristocratic, while those belonging to the second are degraded, from working as palanquin bearers, manufacturers of salt (nún), diggers, and, it is said, gravediggers. Representatives of the Bin division are not met with in Eastern Bengal.

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[1] "Supplemental Glossary," i, 287.

In Gházípúr the caste is reckoned clean, while in Arrah it has gained, according to native ideas, an enviable position, being employed by the sacred order to carry water in Bráhmanical vessels without causing defilement. Binds in Bengal are unclean, and their brethren in the north-west repudiate any relationship with them. For this reason the Bengali Bind often finds it difficult to procure a wife from the small expatriated communities along the Padma.

A Daṣnámí Gosáin periodically visits the Dacca Binds, acting as their Guru, while a degraded Kanaujiya Bráhman officiates as Purohit. Many of the Bengali Binds belong to the Panch Píriyá sect, others worship Ṣiv, and at the Mahábalí festival sacrifice a ram instead of a he-goat as is usual. At the Ganga Pújah a swine is offered to Jalka Deví, the popular goddess of the Chamárs. The patron deity, however, of all Binds is Káṣi Bába, about whom the following childish story is told. A mysterious epidemic was carrying off the herds on the banks of the Ganges, and the ordinary expiatory sacrifices were ineffectual. One evening a clownish Ahír, on going to the river, saw a figure rinsing its mouth from time to time, and making an unearthly sound with a conch shell. The lout concluding that this must be the demon causing the epidemic, crept up and clubbed the unsuspecting bather. Káṣí Náth was the name of the murdered Bráhman, and as the cessation of the murrain coincided with his death, the low Hindustani castes have ever since regarded Káṣí Bába as the maleficent spirit that sends disease among their cattle. Nowadays he is propitiated by the following curious ceremony. As soon as an infectious disease breaks forth the village cattle are massed together, and cotton seed sprinkled over them. The fattest and sleekest animal being singled out is severely beaten with rods. The herd, scared by the noise, scamper off to the nearest shelter followed by the scape bull, and by this means, it is thought, the murrain is stayed.

Like all up-country boatmen who visit Bengal, the Binds invoke Pír Badr, whenever a squall threatens. "Pír Badr!

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[1] "Hindu Tribes and Castes," p. 348.

tákya ek nazar! Pír Badr!" "bestow one glance!" is the ordinary ejaculation.

Karámat 'Alí and the Farazí Maulavís have of late years converted many of these outcast Binds, but the village Muhammadans will not as yet associate with them. These converts are usually styled by the peasantry "Chaylí," from the Bengali word for the Beṛá, or fish trap.

Binds in the upper provinces are commonly addressed by the title Ráwat, but in Bengal Chaudharí is their only designation.

Hindustání Binds are enterprising traders, often visiting Bengal during the cold seasons, with cargoes of wheat, pulse, and "grám." Bengali Binds lead an irregular life. Some cultivate the soil; others kill mullet with the harpoon, or catch them with "Sirkí" screens, like the Beṛua. Many are cunning sportsmen, and during December and January net great numbers of wild fowl and snipe. After the harvest the Binds wander about the country digging up the stores of rice accumulated by field rats in their burrows. From four to six pounds of grain are usually found, but even this quantity is sometimes exceeded. It is said that the Binds feast on the rats, but, as they remark, this would lessen the next year's profit, they carefully avoid injuring them. Another occupation is cutting tamarisk (jháú) on the sandbanks of the Padma, and selling it for firewood. By them are made the best mud brasiers, or Chúlhás, used on board all native boats for cooking.

Finally, Binds freely indulge in spirit drinking, and are very partial to pork, when it can be procured.

BRÁHMAN.

(*a.*) RÁṚHÍ.

The origin of the Bengali Bráhmans is hidden in obscurity. It is, however, generally traced to the introduction of five Bráhmans from Kanauj by Ádisúra, King of Gauṛ, about A.D. 900; but there are grounds for believing that the Vaidika and Sapt-Ṣatí were earlier immigrants, and it is probable, as Dr. Hunter thinks, that the first Aryan settlers in Bengal claimed to be the aristocracy of the new country, and as a natural consequence to be Bráhmans, an idea inseparable (in the Aryan mind) from the rank of an aristocracy. This supposition acquires additional probability from the surviving tradition that Ádisúra applied to the Rájah of Kanauj for priests capable of performing certain Vedic ceremonies, as the false Bráhmans of Bengal were incapable, through ignorance, of doing so.

The names, and gotras, of the five Kanauj Bráhmans were:—

Bhúttanáráyana	of the	Sáṇḍilya	Gotra
Daksha	„	Kaṣyapa	„
Chhándara	„	Vátsya	„
Ṣríharsa	„	Bharadvája	„
Vedagarbha	„	Savarṇa	„

Of the personal history of these men we know líttle,[1] but it is related that they intermarried with their Bengali neighbours, and the issue became the progenitors of the Varendra tribe, while the children by their Hindustání wives became the founders of the Ráṛhí. The Varendra Bráhmans, on the other hand, maintain that they are the legitimate branch, the Ráṛhí the illegitimate.

During the two following centuries the Bráhmans increased so fast by births, and the influx of other settlers from Hindustan, that Ballál Sen, in the eleventh century, found the Ráṛhí Bráhams domiciled in fifty-six Gáins, or communes, isolated from many Sapta-Ṣatí, Vaidika, and low caste Bráhmans, who in contradistinction were designated Nau-gáins, or outsiders, from residing beyond the limits of the communes.[2]

The exact number of descendants of the five Kanaujuja Bráhmans, who were raised to pre-eminence by the reforms of Ballál Sen, is a subject of lasting dispute between the Ráṛhí and Banga Ghaṭaks. The following particulars derived from the Banga genealogists must therefore be received *cum grano.*

Ballál Sen, under Bráhmanical influence, it is supposed, organised a Samáchára, or enquiry, to ascertain which families possessed special religious qualities, entitling them to the first rank in the sacred order, and to classify the rest, according as they had lost one or other important faculty, in subordinate ranks. The nine personal endowments qualifying for the highest position were:—

1. Áchár, faith in the performance of appropriate duties,
2. Vinaya, modesty, or moral training,
3. Vidyá, learning,
4. Pratishṭha, devotion in consecrating a temple,
5. Tírthadarṣana, the regular visitation of holy places,
6. Nishṭha, piety,
7. Avrittí, observance of legal marriages,
8. Tápasa, devotion,
9. Dána, liberality.

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[1] Fragments of moral poems attributed to them, and called Pancha-ratní, are still extant. A translation is to be found in the "New Asiatic Miscellany," vol. i, p. 62. Calcutta, 1789.

[2] "Orissa," by W. W. Hunter, vol. i, p. 249.

Nineteen families found to have preserved untarnished these nine cardinal virtues were enrolled as the eight Mukhya, or superior, Kulins; families who had neglected Áchár were included in fourteen classes, called Gauṇa, or secondary, Kulins; while the large majority, though regular students of the Vedas, having lost Avrittí, and formed alliances with families of ignoble birth, were divided into thirty-four Ṣrotriyá[1] septs.

These classes of Mukhya, Gauṇa, and Ṣrotriyá were honorary distinctions attached to a hereditary hierarchy, who received from the reigning monarch grants of villages and arable lands. Further, no personal misdemeanour could deprive them of the privileges of their order; but to ensure a pure and aristocratic race it was enacted, that an unequal, or irregular, marriage caused loss of prestige, and forfeiture of rank.

The eight Mukhya Kulína families were:—

Vandya (Banarjí),
Chatta (Chatarjí),
Mukhuti (Mukharjí),
Goshála,
Putitunda,
Gánguli,
Kánjilála,
Kundagrámí.

These names were taken from the village, or commune, where the greatest number of approved reputation were found.

Of the inhabitants of Vandya, only six families were enrolled, namely those of Gáhlana, Maheṣvara, Devala, Vámana, Îṣána, and Makaranda. The descendants of the Kanaujiya Bráhman Daksha were found residing in the village of Chatta, and five families, namely, Bahurúp, Sucha, Aravinda, Haláyudha, and Vángála, were deemed worthy of admission. The Mukhutí returned two families, Utsáha and Garuḍa; the Goshála one, Ṣira; the Putitunda one, Govardhanácharya; the Gángulí one, Ṣisa; the Kánjílala two, Kanu and Katúhala; and the Kundagramí one, Roshákara.

The fourteen Gauṇa, or secondary, Kulins were:—

Dirdhángí,
Páriha,
Kulabhí,
Poḍárí,
Pipalaí,
Haḍa,
Ráí,
Keṣarí,
Ghanteswarí,
Dinṣáí,
Pítamundí,
Mahinta,
Guḍa,
Gaḍagadí.

The status of these families was fixed in accordance with their moral characters. Four were inscribed as "Siddha," or perfected; seven as "Ṣuddha," or pure; and three, including

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[1] Literally a Bráhman versed in the study of the Vedas.

Pipalaí and Dinṣáí, as "Káshṭha," excellent, or "Arí." The designation "Arí," or enemy, was given because a Kulin marrying a daughter of one of them was disgraced.

The thirty-four Gáins of Ṣrotriyás were as follows:—

Páladhí,
Pákaḍásí,
Simaláyí,
Vápuli,
Vhurishṭháta,
Kulakulí,
Vatavyala,
Kuṣárí,
Seyaka,
Kusuma,
Ghoshalí,
Mashachataka,
Vasuyárí,
Karála,
Anvulí,
Tailavatí,
Múlagrámí,
Púshalí,
Ákáṣa,
Palasáyí,
Koyárí,
Sáharí,
Bhattáchárya,
Sáteṣvarí,
Náyerí,
Dáyí,
Párihala,
Siyárí,
Siddhala,
Puṇsika,
Nandígrámí,
Kánjárí,
Sunalála,
Válí.

According to some authorities, the Ṣrotriyá were the descendants of the Kanaujiya Bráhmans by Sapta-Ṣati wives, being esteemed inferior to their fathers, but superior to their mothers, maternal grandsires, and to all relatives of the Sapta-Ṣati class. Again, the Banga Ghaṭaks give three more Ṣrotriyá gáins, namely Ghanteṣvarí, Bhatteṣvarí, and Dígál; but the Ráṛhí Ghaṭaks do not recognise more than thirty-four in all.

Such was the classification of Ballál Sen, rendered, it was thought, complete by stringent laws regarding marriage. It was the prerogative of the Gauṇa and Ṣrotriyá to provide wives for the Mukhya Kulins, and to get wives for themselves from their own class equals. The marriage of a daughter into a good Kulin family raised, in public estimation, the character of the father's household, whence arose the strange custom, known as Kula-gotra, by which the reputation of a family depended on the daughter's suitable marriage.

As years rolled on, and families became extinct, the difficulty of obtaining an unexceptionable husband immensely increased. Kulin fathers accordingly often gave away their daughters to Gauṇa, Ṣrotriyá, and even to Sapta-Ṣatí families, thus forming the "Vanṣaja"[1] class. Again, the daughters were often married to the sons of Vanṣaja parents, in which case the character and dignity of the family were forfeited, and it became "Sukṛiti-bhanga," from whom were descended in the next generation the

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[1] Literally, belonging to the family.

Dvipurusha, in the third the Tripurusha, and in the fourth the Cháturpurusha, after which, as among the Varendras, the branch was blended in the Vaṉṣaja class. It was, moreover, the practice in the various grades for the daughters of the lower lineage to marry with their cousins of the elder branch. If the Sukṛiti-Bhanga Bráhman married into a Kulin family it was dishonoured and degraded; or, if a Kulin married a Vaṉṣaja maiden, similar results followed, and he became a Bhanga, or ruined, Bráhman.

With the Muhammadan invasion of A.D. 1199, the Hindu Empire was overthrown, and the artificial structure of Hindu society underwent a complete revolution. Kulins sold their family rank and honour for money; they increased the number of their wives, without regard to the respectability of the families from which they came, and they enhanced their demands as the supply of suitable wives diminished. But it was not only the selfish and unprincipled behaviour of the Bráhmans in the matter of marriage that lowered their characters in popular estimation. The system from its birth bore the seeds of decay, and was doomed to certain destruction. Purity of life, piety, knowledge, and sympathy with the lower orders, were disregarded, or discouraged, and the sacred order sank demoralized beneath a load of vices, unpitied by the people.

A fortunate thing would it have been for Bengal if the scandal had been swept away, and a radical reform introduced on sounder and more equitable principles; but the evils were increased and the vices diffused among a larger circle, by the classification of an obscure Ghaṭak. This rise and unquestioned influence of a Bráhman reformer is one of the most puzzling incidents in the domestic annals of Bengal. His rank and position were plebeian, yet he acquired such a commanding station as to dictate his own terms to the proudest Kulin, and enforce their observance on the most contumacious.

Tradition has preserved a few events of his career, but none of them indicate the policy by which he overcame the discontent and disobedience of a haughty and still dominant oligarchy.

Deví Vara, a Jessore Ghaṭak, lived ten generations after Ballál Sen, in the fourteenth century.[1] He is said to have been a man of eccentric habits, with a strong, though wayward, will. As a young man he visited Kámákhyá, and became a Siddhavák, or a person who had only to express a wish and it was fulfilled. On returning to Bengal he wandered about the country, like any demented Bairágí, shouting out "Akulam! Akulam!" the Kul, or family honour, is gone! It is probable that this "antic disposition" was assumed, for it is a popular belief that his subsequent classification of the Bráhmans turned upon the hospitality and favour shown to him during his peregrinations. A story in point is narrated of him. One day entering the house of Yogiṣvara Paṇḍit, head of the Kharḍadaha Mel, who was from home, the inmates treated him with curt civility.

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[1] Another account states that he lived twelve generations ago.

Incensed by their rudeness, he began shouting "Akulam! Akulam!" and Yogiṣvara became an outcast. On returning home Deví Vara was implored to remove the curse, but as this was impossible, he compensated the sufferer by the following prophecy, worthy of Thomas the Rhymer.

"When Ṣaṣamṛiga[1] returns home, when the sky produces fruit, when the barren woman conceives, then, and then only, shall Yogiṣvara lose his Kul."

The following story is told to explain why a good Bráhman like Deví Vara left no children. At a great meeting of Bráhmans convened to reorganise the order, Deví Vara was tormented by his Guru, Prabhákara, to explain why he was born a Ghaṭak, and not a Kulin Bráhman. Provoked beyond endurance, Deví Vara exclaimed "Prabhákara is Akulam!" The Guru retorted, "The house of Deví Vara shall not remain, he shall be 'ultimus suorum.'"

The reorganising scheme of Deví Vara was confined to the Ráṛhí Kulíns of the Mukhya grade, and did not embrace the Gauṇa or Ṣrotriyá, who had already united to form a homogeneous order with certain trivial limitations regarding precedence. In conformity with the new classification the Kulin Bráhmans were included in three grades:—

Svabháva, or original Kulins,
Bhanga,
Vaṇṣaja.

Furthermore, a most important innovation was introduced, in the creation of thirty-six Mels, or septs, named after the home or chief man of a family.

The thirty-six Mels were:—

Phuliya,
Kharḍadaha,
Saivvanandi,
Ballabhí,
Ṣurai,
Áchárya Ṣekhari,
Pandit Ratni,
Bangala,
Gopala Ghaṭakí,
Cháyanarendrí,
Vijáya Pandit,
Chádáí,
Madháí,
Bidyádhari,
Párihal,
Ṣrí Rangabhattí,
Máladharakhání,
Kákumví,
Harí Majumdárí,
Ṣrí Bandhaní,

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[1] The constellation Lepus.

Pramadaní,
Daṣaratha Ghaṭaki,
Ṣubharajakhání,
Naḍiya,
Rayamelá,
Bhattarághavi,
Dehátí,
Chayí,
Bhairava Ghaṭaki,
Áchambita,
Dharádharí,
Válí,
Rághava Ghosálí,
Ṣungosarvvanandí,
Súdánanda Khání,
Chandravatí.

The cardinal point in the new reorganisation was the law restricting the marriages of Kulins to their own Mel. This limitation led to evils far greater than those of previous times. Claims of superiority were advanced and resisted, and families of the highest rank were disgraced, and their places filled by plebeian houses. Whether this innovation was the work of Deví Vara, or introduced subsequently, is uncertain, but the monstrous absurdity known as Páltí-Prakṛití[1] was intended to restrain the social anarchy. By this contrivance marriages in certain corresponding families of equal rank were enjoined, and any violation of the law was visited by dishonour and degradation. For example, the Mukhuti family were obliged to marry their sons to Chatarjí daughters, and the Chatarjí sons to Mukhuti daughters. When it happened that the Mukhuti had only one son, and the Chatarjí ten daughters, the former was compelled to marry the whole ten, or all remained spinsters. The Kulin boy with hundreds of rich offers of marriage must decline all, until he had fulfilled this obligation. Again, the Bhanga, Vanṣaja, and Ṣrotriyá septs were in eager quest of Kulin husbands to preserve their reputation, and as the total number of Kulins, even before the absorption of the Gauṇa, never equalled the numbers of the Ṣrotriyá, the competition was great. When the Kulins became still further reduced by the loss of many, who departed from amongst them, and formed the Bhanga and Vanṣaja, the competition became extravagant. The polygamy of Kulins was countenanced, and prescribed. They had not only to marry a maiden of their own Mel, but also a Ṣrotriyá wife, and as their pecuniary value rose, the temptation to live by the wages of polygamy became irresistible.

At the present day the classification of Deví Vara is preserved, and the evils of the system have grown so intolerable that legislative interference is solicited by enlightened Hindus. Kulin girls, for want of husbands, are living and dying unmarried, being known as Yamavara, or wedded to Pluto. Svabháva Kulins, yielding to the attractions of a Paṇa, or marriage fee, of two thousand rupees, are breaking their Kul, and marrying Vanṣaja girls, who are immediately resigned to the charge of their parents; but as the Paṇa diminishes ten per cent. with each new wife, it is no uncommon thing for the fee to fall to fifteen or even ten rupees.

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[1] From the Sanskrit Pálana, guarding, cherishing, and Prakṛiti, nature.

As soon as a Svabháva Kulin is degraded to the rank of a Sukṛiti-Bhanga, he adopts matrimony as a profession, and finds no limit to the number of suitors for his hand from among Bhanga and Ṣrotriyá families. As his Haram enlarges from a few up to hundreds, the Bhanga and Ṣrotriyá, ruined by the large marriage fees they have paid, and by the paucity of marriageable girls of their own class, live and die unmarried.

The honour of marrying one's daughter to a Bhanga Kulin is so highly valued in Eastern Bengal, that as soon as a boy is ten years of age, his parents, or guardians, begin discussing his marriage, and before he is twenty he frequently becomes the husband of many wives, of ages varying from five to fifty. The bride, unless of a rich and influential family, rarely sees her husband after marriage, and thus a wide field is opened for adultery and immorality. In a list drawn up by Babú Ubhaya Chunder Dás, the names of two Kulins in Eastern Bengal, each of whom possesses a hundred wives, are given; two with sixty; three with fifty; and three with thirty. This gentleman further asserts, that each Kulin has a register containing the names of the villages where their fathers-in-law reside, and that every cold season he makes a connubial tour, visiting each wife, and after fleecing the foolish parent of as much money as he can, transports himself to another village where he does the same thing. At the end of his tour he returns to his home, living in ease and sensuality until another marriage rouses him to temporary activity.

It is only among Bráhmans of the Ráṛhí Srení that this infamous system exists, for the Varendra Kulins, unreformed by Deví Vara, are said to have as few wives as any other order of high caste Hindus.

The amount of immorality developed by Kulinism is incalculable. Young wives deserted by their husbands, and often living in penury, children brought up without a father, and parents madly ruining their heirs to obtain a licentious polygamous husband for the daughter, is a picture without a redeeming point. Within the last ten years various petitions have been presented to Government urging the necessity of blotting out this hideous crime, but as yet no legislative action has been taken. The two main obstacles to reform are, the opposition of the Ghaṭaks, an influential body, whose existence depends on the continuance of the system, and the selfishness of the Kulins themselves, who prefer certain wealth and ease to the precariousness of a learned, or the exertion of a mercantile, life.

It is a remarkable fact, that in spite of inbreeding, sloth, and debauchery, and notwithstanding the damp and malarious climate of their homes, the Bráhmanical race of Eastern Bengal has preserved its physique and talents, impaired, it is impossible to doubt, but still on a par with the higher Bengali castes. Sanskrit is still their favourite language, and the chief families can read enough to guide them through the intricate ceremonials of their worship. Few Kulin boys attend the more advanced Government schools, as the obligations of the Mel system call them away while still young; but boys are either instructed in village schools, or at home by a Paṇḍit.

The tedious ceremonies connected with the marriage of a Raṛhí Kulin are for the most part correctly detailed by Mr. Ward, but there are several points requiring mention which the vicissitudes of the last seventy years have effected. Before any steps can be taken to marry a Kulin, the Ghaṭak must ascertain first, whether the girl has at any time been engaged, or divorced; second, whether she is younger than the bridegroom elect; third, whether her name differs from his mother's, and fourth, whether her Gotra is different from his. Owing to the extinction of corresponding Mels a Kulin is nowadays permitted to violate the second and third enactments.

A Kulin father, again, can only preserve his Kul intact by one of three ways:—

1. By giving his legitimate daughter to one of equal rank.
2. By making an effigy of his child with Kuṣa grass (Kuṣa-Kanyá), and giving it in marriage to a Kulin male of equal rank.
3. By saying before Ghaṭak witnesses "I would give my daughter, if I had one, to you," addressing a Kulin present, and by making a Tilak, or symbol of marriage, on his forehead.

This last rite, called Káraṇa, still observed in Eastern Bengal, but fast falling into disuetude in other parts of the country, was lately celebrated by a Zamíndár of Mymensingh, who paid twenty-two thousand rupees to the Bráhmans for permission.

Many Mels having died out, a son of a family whose Páltí-Prakṛiti is dead, must marry the only daughter of a widow; while in the case of an only daughter of a Kulin widow, for whom no eligible husband is procurable, the mother may marry her to a Ṣrotriyá, and accept "paṇa" without endangering the family prestige.

In Dacca the Kulin bridegroom is married from the bride's house, while the Ṣrotriyá parents bring their daughter to the bridegroom's village, and she is married in the house of a friend.

The marriages of Kulins are invariably arranged by Ghaṭaks; those of Ṣrotriyás usually by relatives; but as a Ṣrotriyá family is dishonoured if it does not marry a daughter to a Kulin, the Ghaṭaks must negotiate with his parents.

From the foregoing remarks it is obvious that the position of a Kulin parent with a large family of daughters is a most unenviable one. The Ṣástras insist on the early marriages of girls, and censure those who are dilatory. The Kulin therefore, must either pay a large "paṇa" to a Kulin boy, or, if too poor to do so, bribe an octogenarian, or dying Kulin, already possessing a bevy of wives, to condescend to marry his daughter just come of age. Immorality is the natural result, and the number of illegitimate children in Kulin villages is believed to be excessive. The illegitimate son of a Bráhman woman by a Ṣúdra, is facetiously known as Kṛishna-paksha,[1] and generally becomes a Vairágí, while the bastard of a widow by a Kulin is secretly adopted, and the breath of scandal hushed. The occurrence of such an event in a Ṣrotriyá family, however, cannot be concealed, and its effects are disastrous to its respectability.

Ráṛhi Bráhmans have sadly fallen from the standard of purity enjoined by the Bráhmans of Mathurá and Brindában. In accordance with the Ṣástras any Bráhman may accept alms, educate boys in the sacred language, or duties, and instruct mankind generally in virtue and morality. All other occupations are sinful. In Eastern Bengal, however, Bráhmans take service as domestic servants, chiefly as cooks, and do most kinds of husbandry, such as cutting corn and brushwood; but holding the plough, though occasionally resorted to by the very poor, is regarded as derogatory, but does not entail loss of caste. Bengali Bráhmans are as strict as their Hindustání brethren in expelling individuals found selling milk, ghí, iron, lac, or common salt. A Bráhmaṇ, moreover, officiating as a temple priest (Pújárí) in a shrine erected and endowed by one of the Nava-Ṣákha, or a Bráhman Devala, living on oblations offered to an idol, is at once expelled. The profession of a physician was formerly abhorrent to the priesthood; but nowadays many highly educated graduates of the Calcutta University are Bráhmans, who, however, lose caste if they dissect bodies.

The Ráṛhí Bráhmans have diverged still farther from their Kanaujiyá brethren in the matter of diet. Ducks, as well as duck's eggs, onions, a variety of the teal (Nárkúlí) caught by the Bhinds, the spotted rail, or Kharail (Porzana maruetta), the "Mogá" fish, and the flesh of sacrifices, are eaten in Bikrampúr, although their stricter brethren are vegetarians.

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[1] Literally, the dark half of the month.

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Salted, or dried, fish and meat, and the flesh of birds trapped by birdlime, are rejected by all Bráhmans. The Kámrúpí Bráhmans, on the other hand, eat the flesh of buffaloes, geese, and pigeons, but neither the Vaidika Bráhmans, from whom they are descended, nor any other tribe have as yet followed their example. Furthermore, those Ráṛhí Bráhmans, who conform to certain rules of the Ṣákta ritual, drink spirituous liquors, although the tasting of "Madhu" causes forfeiture of caste in Hindustan, and the smoking of Indian hemp (Gánjha), also prohibited, is year by year becoming more common in Bengal.

The majority of Bengali Bráhmans comply with the Sáma-Veda; but a few, chiefly of the Puṣí Lál gotra, follow the Yajur-Veda. Bráhman boys are invested with the sacred cord when seven years old, or more correctly when seven years and three months old, or eight years after conception. The length of the cord depends on the Veda followed, and Bráhmans who obey the Sáma-Veda acquire a "paitá" either reaching from the top of the right thumb, when the arm is extended, to the tip of the left shoulder, or from the top of the sternum to the right thumb. Those, again, who follow the Yajur-Veda, wear it long enough to reach from the right shoulder to the extended right thumb; and the followers of the Rig-Veda from the navel to the anterior fontanelle.

The "paitá" must consist of three plies of three strands joined by knots (gánṭh), the number depending on the gotra of the Bráhman. Thus, the descendants of the Kanaujiyá Bráhmans belonging to the Sáṇḍilya, Kaṣyapa, and Bharadvája gotras have three knots in each ply; while those of the Vátsya and Savarṇa have five.

Bráhmans observe the Deṣ-áchár, or custom of the particular country in which they reside, if it is not contrary to the Ṣástras; and high caste Kanaujiyá Bráhmans living in Bengal do not lose their good name by officiating as Purohits to low caste Hindustání castes, though they would certainly do so in Hindustan. Ráṛhi Kulins, as a rule, have no Jajman, or communities for whom they perform religious services, but degraded Kulins often, and Ṣrotriyás always, have a circle of families, who remunerate them for attending to their religious wants.

The Guru of the Ráṛhí Ṣreṇí is usually a hereditary office, held by the representative of an old respected Kulin family. Should he die leaving a son, the community take especial care to have him properly educated, and instructed in his duties. The Purohit, too, occupies a hereditary office, and is generally a member of a family living in the immediate neighbourhood of his flock.

Nine-tenths of the Ráṛhí Bráhmans either worship Ṣiv, or follow the Ṣákta ritual of the Tantras. Few Vaishnavas are met with, as it is deemed a misdemeanour for an adult Bráhman to forsake the worship of his fathers; but a certain number do join the ranks of the corrupt Vaishnava sects. It is essential in Bengal for a Bráhman, who values orthodoxy, to worship Ṣiv and the Sáligrám, the special deities of the order.

The Ráṛhí Brámans assert that the large majority follow the Dakshináchar form of Ṣákta worship, as being less intricate than the Vámáchar, or Kaula, but other classes of natives deny this, maintaining that in Dacca at least the licentious orgies of the Kaula, or Chakra, Pújáh, as it is popularly called, have more patrons than any other. When the habits of intoxication and licentiousness so prevalent among the higher ranks of the Ráṛhí Bráhmans are considered, it is impossible to resist the conclusion that the popular charge is quite credible. At these impure revels all castes meet on a footing of equality, but at those directed by Ṣúdras, a degraded Bráhman presides, while at the worship of Ṣáktí, the living personification of the goddess, a Bráhmaní girl, is the object adored. The worshippers being bound by an oath not to divulge the mysteries, it is difficult to ascertain what classes, and what numbers, of Bráhmans patronise the assemblies.[1]

The proper deities for a Bengali Bráhman to worship are Kálí, Manasa Deví, and the Sáligrám, and this may be done in any temple, or house, of a clean caste; but he dare not officiate at the shrine of any other deity.

(*b.*) VARENDRA.

The popular story is, that the five Kanaujiyá Bráhmans, introduced by Ádisúra, settled on the east of the Ganges, and forming alliances with the women of the country, their offspring became the Varendra Bráhmans.

Varendra, or the country north of the Padma, between the rivers Karatoyá and Mahánanda, and embracing the modern Zila's of Rájsháhí, Pubna, and Bograh, is the home of this tribe; but as the Ráṛhí have passed beyond the limits of their proper residence into Dinájpúr, so the Varendra have crossed into the northern part of Mymensingh, belonging to the ancient kingdom of Kámrúp.

Ballál Sen classified the Varendra Bráhmans under three heads—

Kulína,
Ṣuddha Ṣrotriyá,
Kashṭa Ṣrotriyá.

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[1] For further particulars see Wilson's "Sects of the Hindus," vol. i, pp. 240–263.

The Kulina were subdivided into eight Gáins, or village communities, namely—

Maitra,
Bhíma,
Rudra-Vágísí,
Santámani, or
Ṣáṇḍilya,
Láhari,
Bhádri,
Sádhu-Vágísí,
Bhadra.

The Ṣuddha, or stainless, Ṣrotriyás were also separated into eight classes—

Karaṇjau,
Nandanavásí,
Champati,
Jampati,
Bhattaṣali,
Naori,
Atharthi,
Káma-devta.

Finally, the Kashṭa, or bad, Ṣrotriyás were resolved into eighty-four families.

A Káp is a Varendra Kulin, who has lost his Kul by making an irregular marriage with a Kashṭa Ṣrotriyá. He retains the same rank among his provincials as a Vaṉsaja does among the Rárhí.

The following story explains the origin of the Káp. One Narasiṉha Naṛal, a Brindában Bráhman, having a grown-up but unmarried daughter, came to Bengal, and while crossing the Padma river, the ferryman upbraided him for keeping her so long a maid, and asked in mockery whether he intended wedding her to Madhu Maitra, or Ráma-dhana Vágísí, the two chief Kulins of the Varendras. Narasiṉha, losing his temper, vowed that he would either marry her to Madhu Maitra, or commit suicide. He accordingly put his daughter, a cow, and a Sáligrám, on board a boat, and proceeded to Guṛanai, near Nátor, where Madhu lived. He met the Bráhman by chance at a bathing ghat, and threatened to sink the boat with its contents, unless he agreed to marry the girl. Madhu sent for his sons, and insisted that one of them should marry her; but all refused, so he himself took her to wife.

At the festival, when food is first taken from the bride's hands, she scoffingly sang—

> "Who is honourable, and who is not,
> To whom shall I give Bháji,[1] and Paramánna?"[2]

The guests believing her to be a Muhammadan damsel in disguise, departed in anger, and declined to hold any further intercourse with the household.

The annual Ṣráddha in memory of his father coming round, Madhu anxious to pacify his relatives, and to induce them to attend, went to the house of his brother-in-law, Ráma-dhana, to ask his advice, but finding him from home, accepted refreshment offered by his sister, and on leaving, gave her this riddle—

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[1] Rice gruel.

[2] Rice and milk.

"If Ráma-dhana comes, he will perform his father's Ṣráddha; if not, he will never do it!"

On his return, Ráma-dhana being unable to solve the puzzle, went to Madhu's house, and learned its meaning. Thereupon he summoned the chief Kulins, and making light of the misunderstanding, told the guests that they had practised a foolish joke (Káp). The anger of the guests was not appeased, and ever after they lived apart, forming the Káp subdivision.

An offshoot, called Chhíṭa Káp, formerly existed, but Rájah Káṇs Náráyana of Ṭáhirpúr, got it readmitted into communion with the main body.

Varendra Bráhmans have not adopted the extravagant custom of Pálti-Prakṛití; but among the Kulins eight Páṭí, or social grades, are distinguished:—

Nirabhil,
Janail,
Bosnah,
Rahala,
Baini,
Atub-Kahní,
Kutb-Kahní,
Panchuria.

Each Gáin of Varendra Kulins belongs to a Páṭí, but a Páṭí is not always identical with a Gáin, for some members of the Maitra are found marrying with the Nirabhil grade, and others with the Janail. Similar conventionalities are observed by the Ṣrotriyás.

The gotras of the Varendra are the same as those of the Ráṛhí Ṣreṇí, namely, Kaṣyapa, Vátsya, Ṣáṇḍilya, Bharadvája, and Savarṇa. Their ordinary titles are, Chakravartti, Parihal, Bhattácharya, Chaudharí, Majumdár, Bhúmika, and Ṣikhdár.

The Varendra differ in many respects from the Ráṛhí. With the former, a widow remarries, if the husband dies before puberty. This is called "Ánupúrva Viṣishṭa." Again, a Ráṛhí Kulin boy is often married to an old woman, but this is never allowed by the Varendra. Both tribes, however, agree that a Kulin cannot wed a girl with the same name as his mother (Matṛi-náma), nor a kinswoman of his own gotra (Sa-gotra).

When a Varendra Kulin takes to wife the daughter of a Káp, he sinks to her level, but the children have special respect shown them, and are therefore more eligible in marriage. On the other hand, when he weds a Ṣrotriyá maiden, as is lawful, the children are Kulins. Marriages between the Ráṛhí, Varendra, and Vaidik Bráhmans are strictly forbidden.

When a Kulin cannot get a suitable husband for his daughter, he must either marry her to a figure made of Kuṣa grass with the usual formalities, or, after having the marriage service performed, smear red lead on her forehead, which is the symbol of the married state.

Varendra Bráhmans usually follow the Sáma-Veda, but a few study the Ṛig, Yajur, and even the Atharva-Veda. Different creeds (Mata) are obeyed. One, known as Rájah Ráí Ka Mata, is the same as that of Rájah Rám Kṛishna; a second is the creed of Bhinad Ráí, a Rájah of Ṭáhirpúr, and a third, derived from the second, is called the Mata of Balihár Rájah.

Vaishnavas are more frequently met with among Varendras than in any other class of Bengali Bráhmans.

Varendra Bráhmins have acquired and retained a more important rank in Bengal than has fallen to the lot of the Ráṛhí Ṣreṇi.

In Rájsháhí, there are still the Rájas of Nátor, Patiya, Ṭáhirpúr, and Chauganga, and in Mymensingh the Rájah of Susang, all of whom belong to old and respected Varendra families.

(*c.*) VAIDIKA.

This, one of the most honoured and homogeneous divisions of Bengali Bráhmans, is distinguished by its adherence to Vedic rites and Vedic literature, by social independence, and abjuration of polygamy. Some authorities have described them as descendants of the original Bráhmans of Bengal, who refused to submit to the reforms of Ballál Sen, and sought for freedom in the frontier lands of Bengal beyond his jurisdiction. Whether this be correct or not, it is certain that Silhet and Orissa contain the most important colonies of the tribe, and Buchanan mentions[1] a tradition lingering among the Vaidika Bráhmans of Dinájpúr, that they had been introduced into that district by Advaita Subuddhí Náráyaṇa, Rájah of Silhet. In Orissa, again, the Vaidik, or high, Bráhmans are said[2] to be immigrants from Bengal or Kanauj, and date their oldest settlements in Purí from about the twelfth century. Others[3] conjecture that many fled from Orissa through fear of being made Vámáchárís, or left-hand worshippers of the Ṣáktí of Ṣiva.

A whimsical story is told at the present day by the Ghaṭaks of the Vaidik Bráhmans to account for their gotras, which is evidently of modern invention, being the counterpart of one related of the Ráṛhí Ṣreṇí Bráhmans. A vulture happened to die on the roof of the palace occupied by Shamal Varman, a Chhatrí Rájah, ruling over the Banga Déṣá, in an undetermined era before Ádisúra, and none of the local Bráhmans being able to avert the calamity thus foreboded, the monarch wrote to his friend the Rájah of Ayodhyá, and besought him to send five Bráhmans, competent to offer the needful sacrifice, and save the household from the vengeance of the offended deity. The Bráhmans arrived, and were so successful, that amid the smoke of the burnt offering the embodied spirit of the dead vulture was seen to soar heavenwards! To these five Bráhmans the Rájah gave large tracts of land, and to six of their tribe, who subsequently arrived, he allotted other tracts, hence the modern separation into two subdivisions of five and six gotras.

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[1] Vol. ii, 734.
[2] "Hunter's Orissa," vol. ii, app. i, p. 7.
[3] Ward, vol. i, 79.

The Kanaujiyá are admitted by all Hindus to be the purest stock of Bráhmans in Northern India, and each offshoot tries by some extravagant story to prove its genuine relationship with the parent stem. Sherring[1] ascertained at Benares that the Vaidika were admitted to be a branch of the Kanaujiyá Bráhmans settled in Bengal, but in Dacca this is not always conceded.

The Vaidika Bráhmans have two great divisions, the Páschátya, or western, and Dákshiṇátya, or southern; the former, alone met with in Eastern Bengal, point to Kanauj as their home; the latter, chiefly inhabiting Central Bengal, claim to belong to the original Bengal stock.

The Páschátya, as has been mentioned, are subdivided into Pancha and Shash gotras. The Pancha, or five, gotras are—

Ṣáṇdilya,
Savarṇa,
Bharadvája,
Ṣaunaka,
Vasishṭha.

The Bharadvája obeyed the Sáma Veda, but having become extinct, the first gotra of the Shash has taken its place.

The Shash, or six, gotras are—

Ṣunaka,
Rathíkara,
Kṛishṇátreya,
Váchyara,
Kaṣyapa,
Gautama.

No two Ghaṭaks, however, repeat the same names, as other gotras have been formed, and usurped a position which cannot be justified. Upamanya, Maitráyalí, Ghṛita Kauṣikí, and Tuṭhíkara are names of uncertain standing.

The Páschátya Vaidiks were originally grouped in fourteen Stháns, or settlements, whence fourteen societies emanated. At the present day, owing to the destructive agency of the River Ganges, the sites of these colonies have been in several instances swept away, leaving no trace behind; but the position of the following eleven has been ascertained:—

In Báqirganj .. .. { Sámanta Sára,
Chandra-dvípa,
Koṭálipáḍa,

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[1] "Hindu Tribes and Castes," p. 23.

In Rájsháhí .. .. Jayárí,
Âlambí,
Brahma Púraka,
In Farrídpúr .. .. Gaurálí,
Paní Kanṭaka,
Âkhará,
In Nadiyá .. .. Navadvípa,
In Jessore .. .. Madhyadéṣa.

The sites of Sántalí, Dadhíchigrám, and Maríchigrám have not as yet been determined.

At present many families live beyond the limits of these settlements, intermarrying with aliens like themselves, but, on payment of a heavy fine, they become re-entitled to the full privileges of the Samáj, or association.

Vaidik Bráhmans are very exclusive, neither giving their daughters in marriage to Kulins, nor acting as Purohits to any Ṣúdra, or Bráhman, family, unless the latter can trace their origin to Kanauj. Furthermore, they do not officiate as Pujárís of temples, and although it is considered undignified to live on the charity of Ṣúdras, a few do so. This sept of Bráhmans minister as the Purohits and Gurus of the Ráṛhí, and Varendra Ṣreṇí, and usually have members of these tribes officiating in the same capacity for them. They have no Kulins, and no Ghaṭaks, and their titles are identical with those of other Bengali Bráhmans; for instance, Chakravarttí, Bhattáchárya, or simply, Ṭhákúr.

They study the Ṛig, Yajur, and Sáma Vedas, while the large majority are Ṣákta worshippers, obeying the ordinances of the Tantras. Vishnu is occasionally worshipped, but for a Vaidik to abandon the time-honoured religion of his family, and become a disciple of a Gosáin, is regarded as highly derogatory, and disgraceful.

A Vaidik is prohibited from marrying into his own or his mother's gotra, as among Ráṛhí Bráhmans. He can only marry one wife, and it is customary for parents to arrange marriages during infancy, and sometimes before children are born. In the latter case, should either die before puberty, a subsequent marriage is full of difficulties. Formerly, no money was paid for a wife, but of late years the practice has become fashionable. As a rule, the Vaidiks do not touch flesh, even if sacrificed, or fish, and when visiting his disciples he seldom wears shoes, or sandals.

The principal occupation of the Vaidik Bráhmans is the celebration of the old and venerated Vedic ceremonies, which their study of the Vedas enables them do, but astronomy, formerly a favourite attainment, is no longer prosecuted. In the Homa and Jaga rites the ministration of a Vaidik is necessary, and even the Ráṛhí and Varendra Kulins require their assistance. No temple is correctly built, no dwelling-house is auspiciously finished, and no tank is properly excavated unless the Vaidik performs the regulated propitiatory rite of consecration; and should an individual be ill he may offer sacrifice for his recovery in the place of the family Purohit. The Nava-graha Jag, or Graha Pújah, the worship of the nine planets, one of their most ordinary rites, consists in piling nine kinds of sacred woods,[1] pouring "Ghí," or clarified butter, over them, and then applying fire, while the Vaidik standing at one side repeats Mantras, or collects, adapted to the particular day of the week.

The Vástú Pújah, or ceremonies observed on laying the foundations of a house, are generally performed by them, but if a Vaidik is not available any Bráhman may officiate. On the site of the new building a pit, a cubit square, being dug, and filled in with billets of Bél and Mangoe, chips of the nine sacred plants are thrown in, "Ghí" poured on the pile, and a light being applied, wheat, barley, linseed, and honey are afterwards cast into the flames. Until this expiatory rite is completed the laity are not allowed to enter the enclosure.

If a Ráṛhí Kulin be on friendly terms with a Vaidik he may eat food in the latter's house, without offence, but they cannot eat together in the caste assembly, as in public the Vaidik can only touch food cooked by one of his own caste.

Every Vaidik learns Sanskrit, but a knowledge of English, or Persian, is highly dishonouring. Vaidiks boast that they never accept service with Hindus or Englishmen, but a few of late years have become Paṇḍits in government schools, an innovation, however, very unpopular with the conservative party of elders. Notwithstanding this exclusiveness the Vaidik becomes independent, and resigned to altered circumstances and new influences whenever he quits home, and is untrammelled by family customs, accepting without compunction any remunerative employment which offers. In Dacca, a Vaidik Bráhman from Murshídábád keeps a liquor shop, but this scandalous occupation does not disqualify him from acting as Purohit to numerous families of Dakhin Ráṛhí Sonár-baniks, who reside in the immediate neighbourhood.

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[1] The nine sacred woods are :—

Paláṣa ..	*Butea frondosa.*	Tajnoḍumbara	*Ficus glomerata.*
Kuṣa ..	*Poa cynosuroides.*	Apánga ..	*Achyranthes aspera.*
Vata ..	*Ficus Indica.*	Khádira ..	*Mimosa catechu.*
Dúrvá ..	*Panicum Dactylon.*	Ṣamí ..	*Adenanthera aculeata.*
Akanda	*Asclepias gigantea.*		

(*d.*) SAPTA-ṢATÍ BRÁHMANS.

The Sapta-Ṣatí Bráhmans are peculiar to Bengal, and extraneous to the ten Bráhmanical tribes. They occupy a low position, admitting their inferiority to the main branches, and their pedigree, though ancient, is uncertain. Ghaṭaks maintain they are descended from Bráhmans banished across the Brahmaputra for resisting the innovations of Ballál Sen; but the popular story is that their ancestors were the seven hundred (Sapta-Ṣatí) ignorant Bráhmans sent by Ádisúra to the court of Kanauj. Sherring,[1] however, mentions a tradition that originally they associated with one of the superior races, but lost their status through the ceremonial delinquencies of the members. At the present day they are still numerous on the north of the Brahmaputra in Tipperah, Silhet, and Mymensingh;[2] but few acknowledge the name.

Whatever was their rank in former days, they have relinquished all class peculiarities, and are gradually being absorbed among the Ṣrotriyá Bráhmans. In Bikrampúr, where many reside, they are said to be divided into twenty-seven septs; but as no one of respectability, or education, will confess that he is a Sapta-Ṣatí, it is impossible to arrive at a correct conclusion. Sherring, on the other hand, enumerates sixteen septs, of which only nine correspond with the following list.

The twenty-seven septs are—

Sagáí,
Sogáí,
Nánashi,
Jagáí,
Helaí,
Kálai, or Karlá,
Dhai,
Bánasi,
Dhánasí,
Kanthuri,
Katání,
Kuṣala,
Uchala,
Ulaka,
Mulk-júrí,
Kandaka,
Chairika,
Bántopi,
Latárí,
Pitárí,
Baghráí,
Pharphara,
Bachaní,
Jarjara,
Halika,
Chairaka,
Banika.

Sherring likewise gives the gotra to which each sept belongs; but in Bikrampúr the Ghaṭaks allege that having forgotten the names of their saintly progenitors, the Sapta-Ṣatí assumed those of the Kanaujiyá Bráhmans. This misstatement, evidently of modern origin, is quite consistent with the claim they at present put forth of being Ṣrotriyá Bráhmans.

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[1] "Hindu Tribes and Castes of Benares," p. 112.

[2] "Topography of Dacca," by James Taylor, p. 229.

Neither Sapta-Ṣatí Kulins nor Ghaṭaks exist. They, however, give their daughters in marriage to Kulins of the Ráṛhí Ṣreṇí, and by paying a heavy dowry, often amounting to one thousand rupees, obtain brides from Ṣrotriyá families. But cases occasionally occur of their being imposed upon by some treacherous Ghaṭak, who abducts, or buys, a Ṣúdra girl from another part of the country, and palms her upon them as a maiden of aristocratic, and pure Bráhmanical, lineage. A Kulin Bráhman of the Ráṛhí Ṣreṇí will, it is said, eat and drink with the Sapta-Ṣatí; a Vanṣaja never.

Ṣrotriyá Bráhmans usually officiate as Purohits, but in some parts the Sapta-Saṭí have Bráhmans of their own. Formerly the teaching of the Yajur Vedar was followed, but of late years their religious rites, having been assimilated to those of the Ráṛhí Bráhmans, the Sáma Veda is obeyed.

The ordinary title of the Sapta-Ṣatí is Ṣarman, never Dev-Sarmmá, as among the ten tribes; but Sirkár, Ráí, Chaudharí, and Chakravartí are common appellations.

(e.) BHÁṬ.

This is a race differing in many respects from the Bháṭ, or bards, of Hindustan, and repudiating the usually acknowledged descent from a Kshatriyá and a Bráhman widow. Like the Vaidik Bráhmans they chiefly inhabit Silhet and Tipperah, claiming to be the offspring of the aboriginal Bráhmans employed as Ghaṭaks for the order generally. They likewise affirm that they retired, or were driven, into the borders of Bengal for refusing to submit to the reforming hand of Ballál Sen. In Silhet the Ráṛhí Bráhmans still eat with the Bháṭs, but in Dacca the latter are reckoned unclean, and in Tipperah, having fallen in rank, they earn a precarious livelihood by manufacturing umbrellas.

The Bháṭs are not numerous in any part of Bengal, only 3,372 individuals being entered in the census returns, of whom 44 per cent. reside in Midnapore, and 540 persons in four out of the nine eastern districts.

In January the Bháṭs leave their homes, travelling to all parts of Eastern Bengal, and, being in great request, are fully engaged during the subsequent Hindu matrimonial season. Each company receives a fixed yearly sum from every Hindu household within a definite area, amounting usually to eight anas. In return they are expected to visit the house, and recite Kavitás, or songs, extolling the worth and renown of the family. Satirical songs are great favourites with Hindus, and none win more applause than those laying bare the foibles and well-intentioned vagaries of the English rule, or the eccentricities and irascibility of some local magnate. Very few bards can sing extemporary songs, their effusions, usually composed by one, and learned off by heart by the others, being always metrical, often humorous, and generally seasoned with puns and equivocal words. Their sole occupation is the recital of verses, unaccompanied by instrumental music. They are met with everywhere when Hindu families celebrate a festival, or domestic event, appearing on such occasions uninvited, and exacting by their noisy importunity a share of the food and charity that is being doled to the poor. Their shamelessness in this respect is incredible. During the Durga Pújah they force their way into respectable houses, and make such a horrid uproar by shouting and singing that the inmates gladly pay something to be rid of them. Should this persecution have no effect on the rich man inside, they, by means of a brass lotah and an iron rod, madden the most phlegmatic Bábu, who pays liberally for their departure. The Bengali Bhát is, as a rule, uneducated, and very few know Sanskrit.

They have three gotras, Kaṣyapa, Ṣáṇḍilya, and Bharadvája, and are all Ṣákta worshippers, addicted to intemperance.

A Bháṭ would be dishonoured by acting as a Pujárí, or priest of a temple; or a Purohit.

After residing for six months in Bengal they return to their homes in Silhet with a fund of twenty or thirty rupees, which is augmented by the rent of a piece of land cultivated by other members of his family. The head of the house never cultivates land himself, as is done by the Hindustání Bháṭ, on which account no fraternization between the two is possible.

(*f.*) ÁCHÁRJ, ÁCHÁRYA.

This term is properly applied to the Bráhman who instructs the Kshatriyá and Vaiṣyas in the Vedas; but in Bengal it is the name of a low and despised tribe of Bráhmans. Persons of this class are known as Lagan-Áchárjí, Gaṇaka (astrologer), or Daivajna (calculator of nativities), and, in Purneah, as Upádhyáya, or teachers.

Various traditions as to their origin are current. According to one they are descendants of Ráṛhí Bráhmans, and to another, they spring from the degenerate priesthood residing in Bengal anterior to the reforms of Ballál Sen. Others claim to be descended from a Muní, called Devala, and a Vaiṣya mother; but this parentage gives them no right to the rank of Bráhmans, although they are popularly recognized as such by the Ṣúdras, who usually address them as " Ganak Ṭhákúr."

The caste attributes its insignificance and decreasing numbers to a curse laid on it, and at the present day they have not more than sixteen houses in the city of Ḍacca. The members are therefore obliged to intermarry with Áchárjí Bráhmans in other districts.

This caste recognizes six gotras, namely :—

Sáṇdilya,
Bharadvája,
Kaṣyapa,
Madhu-Kulya,
Savarṇa,
Váchava.

In Eastern Bengal the class is an illiterate one, Sanskrit being rarely studied, but when it is, the Achárjí ceases to be a fortune teller, and becomes a Paṇḍit.

At three domestic ceremonies the Achárjí attends, and receives presents. At a Ṣráddha, the offering made to the Sun (Súrya-Argha) is his perquisite, when the Anna-práṣana, at which a child is first given rice to chew, and when the young Bráhman is invested with the sacred thread (Upanaya), his presence is necessary. The offerings he receives on these occasions consist of napkins and clothes, but, if the family be poor, he is content with the former, and a few anas. Strange to say, these despised Bráhmans share with the Dôms the oblations made during eclipses of the sun or moon.

Their chief occupation is casting nativities, deciphering horoscopes, and drawing up almanacs and ephemerides. In the month of Baisákh, the first of the Hindu calendar, they foretell the peculiarities of the ensuing year to each household, acquainting the members with the good or evil fortune that will befall them, and giving warning of the auspicious and unpropitious regents of the sky, land, and water, and many other astrological signs, which have always found credulous believers among the ignorant and superstitious races of men. All Hindus, and most Muhammadan families of the old school, consult these astrologers on the birth of a son, and as much as a hundred rupees are given for an unexceptionable horoscope. Like the gypsies, they still pretend to read fortunes by palmistry, and to be masters of other equally occult sciences. With them a circular mark round the tip of any finger presages wealth and power, a perpendicular wrinkle in the centre of the forehead entitles the lucky person to the title of Ráj-danḍ (royal sceptre), or Ráj-bhágí (sharer of empire). Although discredited by the higher and instructed classes, these fortune-tellers exert enormous influence over the happiness and well being of the masses. There is usually something displeasing about the physiognomy of these Bráhmans. They are as black as any Ṣúdra, and their pretended sanctity and learning are not belied by their calm and phlegmatic manner. With the greatest presence of mind, they refer any failure in their predictions to some trifling error in the calculations, and, by rearranging their figures, prove that the event would necessarily have occurred had it been correctly demonstrated.

The Achárjí is frequently a gold or silver, smith, and he is the acknowledged painter and delineator of the different gods and goddesses; the Kumhár fashioning the idol, while the Achárjí paints and embellishes it. He also depicts the scenes exhibited on the Misls, or platforms, carried about on great festival days. Their skill is small, as they have no schools of art, and it is imperative that the portraits of the Hindu gods and goddesses shall be of a stereotyped outline, otherwise the populace would not recognise them; but the background may be designed according to the fancy and taste of the artist. It is here that they fail, and their pictures are, as a rule, the sorriest daubs, without any idea of perspective, or anatomy. They possess, however, a slight knowledge of the composition of compound colours, but their art is subservient to Hindu taste, which demands a profusion of bright and abruptly alternating colours. Their paint-brush, made of goat's hair, is called " Tulí."

The Achárjí is also a house decorator, ornamenting cornices, and painting designs of flowers and animals on the walls of rooms.

Astronomy is a sealed book to him, and he has no knowledge of any astronomical books or instruments. Finally, he is often a physician, but his skill is not greater than that of the thousand quacks around; and formerly he inoculated children.

It is a remarkable fact that Achárjí Bráhmans are generally Vaishnavas in creed, differing in this respect from all others of the sacred order, while their religious ceremonies are identical with those of the Bengali Bráhmans. Owing to the paucity of their numbers, a young man has often to pay from two to three hundred rupees for a wife, and many, not being able to meet this expenditure, die unmarried, and their families become extinct.

The Rangsáz, or oil painter, quite distinct from the Muhammadan Naqqásh, is usually an Achárjí. He is always addressed as Ustádgar. The Rangsáz formerly prepared his own colours, but now English paints, being cheaper and more durable, are procured from Calcutta.

(*g.*) Agradána.

This, the lowest and most unhonoured class of Bráhmans, is usually regarded as a degraded branch of the Sawálákhya

Bráhmans of Hindustan, who became dishonoured from claiming as their perquisite the offerings presented at the Angapráyaṣchitta, when the next of kin presents offerings at the first Ṣráddha. In Bengal they are in irony called Mahá-purohit, Mahá-Bráhmana, Mahá-Ṣráddhí, or Mahá-putra, and from acting at the funerals of Bráhmans, and members of the Nava-Ṣákha, Marápoḍa Bráhmans. In Hindustan the individual discharging similar duties is known as Mahá-pátra, or Kantaha.

The services of these men can nowadays be dispensed with, as the family Purohit often reads the Mantras at the burning Gháṭ.

The Agradána, assuming a higher social rank, refuse to eat with the Áchárjí; but the latter do not decline alms given by the former. The Áchárjí again eats with the Ṣúdra, or Patit, Bráhman, who would be excommunicated if he held any social intercourse with the Agradána.

According to their own account, these Bráhmans are degraded Ráṛhí, and their gotras still bear the names of the most holy Munís. These are five in number—

Sáṇḍilya,
Bharadvája,
Kaṣyapa,
Savarṇa,
Váchava.

Their marriages and religious rites are the same as those of the Ráṛhí Bráhmans. A work, called Ṣráddha-Veda, written in Bengali, is adopted as their guide book. At Ṣráddhas they receive a day's food and from one ana to twenty-five rupees.

The Agradána is usually as illiterate as the Áchárjí. When learned in Sanskrit, he assumes, or is given, the title of Paṇḍit. The caste has no established Pancháít, but when disputes occur five elders meet and consult together.

CHÁÍN, CHÁÍ.

This is one of the largest and most scattered fisher tribes of Northern India. In Bengal they number 67,300 persons, chiefly congregated in Maldah and Murshídábád, while in the nine Eastern districts only 450 are returned. In Bihár as many as 41,686 are registered, being massed in Patna and Mungír, while the Santal pergunnahs contain 17,576. According to Buchanan[1] Nator in Rájsháhí was, in his day, the centre of the tribe; but Maldah now returns more than any other district of Bengal.

The Cháín are found in Oudh, where Carnegy[2] connects them with the Tháru, Rájí, Nat, and other unclassified tribes, inhabiting the base of the Himalayas, and traces in their physiognomy features peculiar to Mongolian races. Sherring,[1] again, in one place speaks of them as a subdivision of Malláhs, in another as a predatory tribe of Oudh and Gorakhpúr. Beverley, on the other hand, thinks they resemble the Binds, although the Cháíns are most numerous south of the Ganges, the Binds in Northern Bihár. It is most probable that, like other fisher castes, the Cháíns are remnants, or offshoots, of an aboriginal race, having no relationship with the true Aryan Hindus.

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[1] "Eastern India," i, 173.

[2] "Races of Oudh," pp. 8, 14.

Wherever found, the Cháíns are notorious as thieves, and "extraordinary clever impostors and thimbleriggers,"[2] although Mr. Beverley asserts that this bad character is not altogether deserved. The term "Cháí-paná," however, is a common term for stealing among the Hindi speaking natives, while throughout Bengal individuals belonging to the caste are watched with great suspicion.

At their homes Cháíns are cultivators, as well as boatmen and fishermen, catching mullet with the "Sirkí" mat, as the Binds do. In Oudh, and the north-western provinces, they are cultivators and prepare Khair, or catechu. In Eastern Bengal they appear as traders in grain and pulse.

As among other impure tribes, a Dasnámí Gosáin acts as Guru, a degraded Maithila Bráhman as Purohit. In Oudh they worship Mahábíra, the Monkey god, Sat Naráyana, and Deví Pátan, while they drink spirits, and feast on pork. Those who come to Bengal, like other fisher tribes, are followers of the Pánch Píriya creed, and worshippers of Koila Bábá, freely indulging in spirits whenever a favourably opportunity presents itself.

CHÁMAR (H), CHÁMÁR (B), CHARMA-KÁRA (S).

This Hindustani tribe is found in all parts of Bengal, living apart in villages of their own, everywhere following the same customs, and prosecuting the same trade. The north-west provinces is the home of the Chamár, and in 1865 they numbered 3,580,385 individuals. In Bihár, again, according to the census of 1872, there were 711,721, while in Bengal proper, Chámárs and Ṛishís only numbered 393,490. In the nine eastern districts 47,053 were returned, of whom 24,063, or 50·6 per cent., belonged to Dacca.

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[1] "Hindu Tribes and Castes," pp. 346, 390.

[2] "Note on Inferior Castes, &c, in the N. W. Provinces," by E. A. Reade, C.S. p. 39.

The Chamár is descended, according to the Puráṇas, from a boatman and a Chaṇḍál woman; but Menu represents them as being Nisháda, or outcasts, the offspring of a Bráhman and a Ṣúdra mother. In Oudh, at the present day, their descent is traced to the fabulous hero Nikhad and a Ḍab-gar, or currier woman.[1] There cannot, however, be any doubt that Chamárs belong to a semi-Hinduised aboriginal tribe reduced to the level of other helot races, and expelled from the homes of the Aryan Hindus.

The Chamár is proverbially a black man, but in the Central provinces he is described as a brown, not a dark skinned person, while in Eastern Bengal he is not so swarthy as the average Chaṇḍál, and is infinitely fairer, with a more delicate and intellectual cast of features, than many Ṣrotriyá Bráhmans.

Chamárs trace their own pedigree to Raví, or Rái, Dás, the famous disciple of Rámánanda at the end of the fourteenth century, and whenever a Chamár is asked what he is, he replies a Raví Dás. Though despised and spurned by all classes, the Chamár is proud and punctilious, never touching the leavings of a Bráhman's meal, nor eating anything cooked by a Bengali Bráhman, although he has no objections if a Hindustání Bráhman prepares it.

According to the Chamárs of Eastern Bengal, the caste has the following seven "gots" or subdivisions:—

Jatúá,
Kuláha,
Jaiswára,
Jhúsia,
Dohár,
Kanaujiyá,
Korí.

In Dacca the Chamárs all belong to the Jhúsia "got," and came originally from Gházípúr, Mungír, and Arrah. Many have permanently settled in Bengal, but others only remain a few years until money is saved, when they return to spend it at their homes. Chamárs are very gregarious, being generally massed in the large towns, but occasionally small settlements are found scattered throughout the interior.

In Dacca, Chamárs are employed in tanning leather, making shoes, and grooming horses. The Chamṛá-farosh hire them to preserve hides, but there is such bitter enmity between the caste and the Ṛishís, that they are rarely engaged to skin animals.

The Chamár is inconceivably dirty in his habits, and offends others besides the Hindu by his neglect of all sanitary laws. Large droves of pigs are bred by them, and it is no uncommon sight to witness children and pigs wallowing together in the mire. Hides, in various stages of preparation, hang about the hut, yet strange to say the women are very prolific, and with the exception of a fisher village, nowhere are so many chubby children to be seen as in a filthy Chamár hamlet. Chamárs eat both beef and pork, and like the European gypsies have no repugnance to cooking the flesh of animals dying naturally.

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[1] Carnegy's "Traces of Oudh," app., p. 85.

Hindustání Chamárs are always employed as musicians at Hindu weddings, their favourite instruments being the "Surnáe," or pipe, and varieties of the drum, such as "Ḍholak" and "Ṭása," but in Eastern Bengal no male or female Chamár ever performs as a professional musician, and it is only at domestic festivities that they play on the "Ḍhol," or drum; the "Jhánjh," or cymbals; the "Ektára," or harp; and the "Khanjarí," or tambourine.

By far the most interesting features of the Chamár caste are their religious and social customs. They have no Purohit, their religious ceremonies being directed by one of the elders; but Gurus, who give Mantras to children, are found, and a Hindustání Bráhman is often consulted regarding a lucky day for a wedding. Chamárs have always exhibited a remarkable dislike to Bráhmans, and to the Hindu ritual. They, nevertheless, observe many rites popularly regarded as of Hindu origin, but which were probably festivals of the village gods kept for ages before the Aryan invasion. The large majority of Bengali Chamárs belong to the Sat Náráyana sect, and "Sants" are very numerous among them. Futhermore, the Mahant of that sect is always regarded as the religious head of the whole tribe. In Biláspúr of the central provinces, Chamárs constitute twenty-seven per cent. of the Hindu population, and in 1825 one of their number, named Ghásí Dás, founded a religion which he called Sat-námí.[1] The principal doctrines of his creed were social equality, no idolatry, and the worship of one God, who was not to be represented by any graven image or likeness. Ghásí Dás died in 1850, but his work still lives. Though imbued with many superstitions, the Chamárs have generally adopted this new faith, repudiated Bráhmanical interference, and enlisted many brethren of other districts into their ranks. The Sat-Náráyana sect is also a deistical one, and it is a curious coincidence, that the tribe should have adopted, in places so far apart, a creed that is almost identical.

A few Dacca Chamárs belong to the Kabír "Panth," but none have joined any of the Vaishnava sects.

The principal annual festival of the Chamárs is the Ṣrípanchamí, when they abstain from work for two days, spending them in alternate devotion at the Dhámghar, and in intoxication at home. Another of their festivals is the Rámanauamí, or birthday of Ráma, held on the ninth lunar day of Chaitra (March-April), when they offer flowers, betle-nut, and sweetmeats to their ancestor, Raví Dás.

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[1] "Gazetteer of the Central Provinces," p. 101; "The Highlands of Central India," by Captain J. Forsyth, p. 412.

A few days before the Dashará the Chámaíns perambulate the streets, playing and singing, with a pot of water in the left hand, a sprig of "Ním" in the right, soliciting alms for the approaching Deví festival. Money, or grain, must be got by begging, for they believe the worship would be ineffectual if the offerings had to be paid for.

On the "Nauamí," or ninth lunar day of Áswin (September-October), the day preceding the Dashará, the worship of Deví is observed, and offerings of swine, goats, and spirits, made to the dread goddess. On this day the old Dravidian system of demonolatry, or Shamanism, is exhibited, when one of their number working himself up into a frenzy, becomes possessed by the demon and reveals futurity. The Chamárs place great value on the answers given, and very few are so contented with their lot in life as not to desire an insight into the future.

When sickness, or epidemic diseases, invade their homes, the women fasten a piece of plantain leaf round their necks, and go about begging. Should their wishes be fulfilled, a vow is taken to celebrate the worship of Deví, Ṣítala, or Jalka Deví, whichever goddess is supposed to cause the outbreak. The worship is held on a piece of ground marked off, and smeared with cow-dung. A fire being lighted, and "Ghí" and spirits thrown on it, the worshipper makes obeisance, bowing his forehead to the ground, and muttering certain incantations. A swine is then sacrificed, and the bones and offal being buried, the flesh is roasted and eaten, but no one must take home with him any scrap of the victim.

Jalka Deví seems identical with the Rákhya Kálí of Bengali villagers, and is said to have seven sisters who are worshipped on special occasions.

At Chamár marriages an elder presides, but a Bráhman usually selects the day. The father of the bride, as a rule, receives a sum of money for his daughter. During the marriage service the bridegroom sits on the knee of the bride's father, and the bridegroom's father receives a few ornaments and a cup of spirits, after which each of the guests is offered a cup.

A "Marocha" is not made, but a Hindustaní barber prepares and whitewashes a space, or "Chauk," within which the pair sit. He also stains the feet of the bride and bridegroom with "Álta," or cotton soaked in lac dye, and is responsible that all the relatives and friends are invited to the marriage.

Chamárs have no ceremony at the naming of a child, the name being selected by a relative or intimate friend.

The only class of natives, not Muhammadans, who still practise the Sagáí, or Levirate marriage, are the Chamárs. When an elder brother dies childless, the younger must marry the widow after a year, or eighteen months, unless they mutually agree not to do so, in which case she returns to her father's house, where she is free to remarry with anyone she pleases.

On her remarriage, the family of her first husband cannot claim any compensation, as is the custom with the Jews and other races, who follow this marriage law. When a younger brother marries his widowed sister-in-law, no service is performed. The formality is gone through of consulting the Pancháít, with the object of deciding whether the marriage is well-timed or not. An elder brother, again, is prohibited from marrying his younger brother's widow, the sole purpose of the Levirate marriage being the perpetuation and exaltation of the head of the family. Among Muhammadans the Levirate marriage is ordained but rarely performed. According to their legislators the sister-in-law must live for a whole year as a widow, when she may become the " Nikáh " wife of her husband's brother, for that is the only position she can aspire to. Chamárs do not consider concubinage (Ardhí) disgraceful, but being usually poor, few can afford themselves the luxury.

Chamárs still observe the pleasing custom called "Bháí-photá," on the last day of the Hindu year, when sisters present their brothers with a new suit of clothes and sweetmeats, and make with a paste of red sandal wood a dot on their foreheads; a similar usage, known as "Bhrátṛí-dvitíyá," is practised by Bengalis on the second day after the new moon of Kártik.

Chamárs usually bury their dead, and if the husband is buried, his widow will be laid beside him if she had been taught the same Mantra, otherwise her body is burned.

Throughout Hindustan parents frighten naughty children by telling them that Nona Chamáín will carry them off. This redoubtable old witch is said by the Chamárs to have been the mother, or grandmother, of Ravi Dás, but why she acquired such unenviable notoriety is unknown. In Bengal her name is never heard of, but a domestic bogey haunts each household. In one it is the "Buṛhí," or old woman, in another, "Bhúta," a ghost, in a third, "Pretní," a witch, and in a fourth, "Gala-Káṭa Káfir," literally, the infidel with his throat gashed.

The Chamáíns, or female Chamárs, are distinguished throughout Bengal by their huge inelegant anklets (Páirí) and bracelets (Bangṛí), made of bell-metal. The former often weigh from eight to ten pounds, the latter from two to four. They also wear the "Ṭiklí," or spangle, on the forehead, although in Bengal it is regarded as a tawdry ornament of the lowest and most immoral women. Chamáíns consider it a great attraction to have their bodies tattooed, consequently their chests, foreheads, arms, and legs, are disfigured with patterns of fantastic shape. In Hindustan the Natní is the great tattooer, but not being met with in Bengal, the Chamáíns are often put to great straits, being frequently obliged to pay a visit to their original homes for the purpose of having the fashionable decoration indelibly stained on their bodies.

Chamáíns are the midwives of India, and are generally believed, though erroneously, to be skilled in all the mysteries of parturition. They have no scruples about cutting the navel cord as other Hindus have, but in the villages of the interior where no Chamáíns reside, the females of the Bhúinmálí, Chanḍál, and Ghulám Káyath act as midwives, and are equally unscrupulous. It is a proverbial saying among Hindus that a household becomes unclean if a Chamár woman has not attended at the birth of any child belonging to it.

Chamár women are ceremonially unclean for ten days subsequent to childbirth, when after bathing, casting away all old cooking utensils and buying new ones, a feast, called "Bárahiya," is celebrated, upon which she resumes her usual household duties.

CHANḌÁLA.

The Chanḍáls, one of the most interesting races in Bengal, are more generally known as Nama-Ṣúdra, or Changa. The derivation of the former name is uncertain, but it is probably the Sanskrit Namas, adoration, which is always used as a vocative when praying, or the Bengali Námote, below, underneath. Changa again, in Sanskrit, signifies handsome, and was most likely used in irony by the early Hindus. The following synonyms are given by Amara Sinha, Plava (one who moves about), Mátanga (? elephant hunter), Janmagama (life-taker), Nishád-svapácha (dog-eater), Antevásí (one residing on the confines of a village), Divákirti, and Púkkasa.

From the earliest recorded times the Chanḍálas have been an outcast and helot race, performing menial duties for the Bráhmans, and living apart outside cities occupied by the paramount Aryan race. They are represented by Menu as the offspring of a Ṣúdra male and a Bráhman female, and as "the lowest of men," who are excluded from the performance of obsequies to their ancestors, and whose touch was as defiling as that of a corpse. In the Mahá Bhárata they are introduced as hired assassins, whose humanity, however, revolts against putting an innocent boy to death. In the Rámáyana they are described as ill-formed and terrible in aspect, dressing in blue, or yellow, garments with a red cloth over the shoulders, a bear's skin around the loins, and iron ornaments on the wrists. Even the liberal minded Abúl Fazl describes the Chaṇḍáls of the sixteenth century as "vile wretches who eat carrion." At the present day the term Chaṇḍál is throughout India used only in abuse, and is not acknowledged by any race, or caste, as its peculiar designation. In Hindustan it is the common name of the Kantha Bráhman, and everywhere it is an epithet cast at the Dôm. The higher subdivisions of the Nama-ṣúdras apply it to the lower, while the lower transfer it to the Dôm.

The Dacca Chaṇḍáls retain an obscure tradition of having originally migrated from Gayá, and make mention of a certain Govardhan Chaṇḍál as an ancestor of theirs. There can be no doubt, however, that they belong to a powerful aboriginal, or Dravidian, tribe, who, driven before the Aryan invaders, or by later persecution, sought shelter in the marshy forests of Bengal. The fact that they alone among the population of lower Bengal use the Káyathí Nágarí, the common written language of Dinájpúr, and that a Chaṇḍál Rájah ruled from the fort, whose ruins are still shown in the Bhowál jungle, prove that they were in early times a strongly organized commonwealth driven forth from their homes in the north in search of freedom, and security of religious worship. Mr. Wells[1] quotes a tradition of Hindu invention, current among the Chaṇḍáls of Farrídpúr, to the effect "that they were originally a complete Hindu community consisting of persons of all castes, from the Bráhman downwards, who, on having the misfortune to be cursed in a body by a vengeful Bráhman of unutterable sanctity in Dacca, quitted their ancestral homes, and emigrated bodily to the southern wastes of Farrídpúr, Jessore, and Báqirganj."

According to a tradition of the Dacca Chaṇḍáls they were formerly Bráhmans, who became degraded by eating with Ṣúdras, but others assert that in days of yore they were the domestic servants of Bráhmans, for which reason they have perpetuated many of the religious observances of their masters. For instance, the Chaṇḍál celebrates the Ṣráddha on the eleventh day, as Bráhmans do, and the Gayáwál priests conduct the obsequial ceremonies of the Bengali Chaṇḍáls without any compunction.

Mr. Beverley, again, is of opinion that Chaṇḍál is merely a generic title, and the tribe identical with the Mals of the Rájmahal Hills, an undoubted Dravidian clan, and demonstrates from the census figures that in many districts the number of

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[1] Appendix to Census Report of 1872, p. vi.

Chaṇḍáls is in the inverse ratio to the Mals. There appear to be some grounds for this supposition, but an obvious error occurs in the return of 4,663 Mals in Dacca, where none exist, and the omission of any Málos, who are numerous. The latter, though undoubtedly a remnant of some aboriginal race, have not as yet been identified with the Mals.

Dr. Buchanan considered the Chaṇḍál of Bengal to be identical with the Dosádh of Bihár. Although both are equally low in the scale of caste, and characterized by an unusual amount of independence and self-reliance, very great differences actually exist. The Dosádh worships deified heroes belonging to his tribe, the Chaṇḍál never does. The Dosádh invokes Ráhu and Ketu, the former being his tutelary deity, while we find no such divinity reverenced by the Chaṇḍál. Finally, the Ṣráddha of the Dosádh is celebrated on the thirtieth day as with the Ṣúdras, that of the Chaṇdál on the eleventh as with Bráhmans.

The Chaṇḍáls of Eastern Bengal have separated into eight classes, that never eat, and seldom intermarry, with each other:—

1. Hálwah from Hál, a plough, are cultivators.
2. Ghási are grass-cutters.
3. Kandho, from Skandha, the shoulder, are palanquin bearers.
4. Karrál, are fishmongers.
5. Bárí, probably a corruption of Barhái, a carpenter.
6. Beṛua from Byaḍa, Beṛ, an inclosure.
7. Pôd.
8. Baqqál.

The Hálwah claim precedence over all the others, not only as being of purer descent, but as preserving the old tribal customs unchanged. They associate with and marry into Karrál families, but repel the other classes. The Pôd, numerous in Hughlí and Jessore, but unknown in Dacca, are cultivators, potters, and club-men (Láṭhíyals).

Although subdivided according to trades Chaṇḍáls actually work at anything. They are the only Hindus employed in the boats (Bajrá) hired by Europeans, they form a large proportion of the peasantry, and they are shopkeepers, goldsmiths, blacksmiths, oilmen, as well as successful traders. They are, however, debarred from becoming fishermen, although fishing for domestic use is sanctioned. In the census returns of 1872, the Chaṇḍáls, correctly included among the semi-Hinduized aborigines, are met with in every district of Bengal, forming, however, a very small fraction of the population in the most northern, western, and south eastern divisions. They are chiefly congregated in the districts of Báqirganj (326,755); Jessore (271,325); Dacca (191,162); Farrídpúr (156,223); Mymensingh (123,262); and

Silhet (122,457), forming a total of 1,191,184 persons, or 73 per cent. of the whole Chaṇḍál race in Bengal, which comprises 1,620,545 individuals.

The Chaṇḍáls of Eastern Bengal have only one gotra, the Kaṣyapa, and the large majority are Vaishnavas in creed. They have a Patit Bráhman of their own, but he is not so necessary to them as to the Ṣúdra castes. The washerman and barber are Chaṇḍáls, as professional workmen decline to assist them. The Bhúinmálí is loth to work for them, there being much secret jealousy between the castes, which in some places has broken out into open feuds. At village festivals the Chaṇḍál is treated as equal in rank with the Bhúinmálí and Chamár, and obliged to put off his shoes before he sits down in the assembly. The clean Ṣúdra castes occasionally, and the unclean tribes always, sit with the Chaṇḍál, and at times will accept his dry pipe. Nevertheless, vile as he is according to Hindu notions, the Chaṇḍál is polluted if he touches the stool on which a Súnṛí is sitting. Futhermore, the Ṣúdra Bráhmans will nowadays eat food in a rich Chaṇḍál's house, and a Ṣrotriyá will accept of a meal, but not partake of it within his walls, although were he to do so in the utterly vile Sáha's house, he would be irretrievably lost.

The Chaṇḍál is very particular as regards caste prejudices. He never allows an European to stand or walk over his cooking place on board a boat, and if his master inadvertently does so, while the food is preparing, it is at once thrown away. He is also very scrupulous about bathing before meals, and about the cleanliness of his pots and pans. Still more, he takes a pride in his boat, and the tidy state in which he keeps it contrasts forcibly with the appearance of one manned by Muhammadan boatmen.

Many customs characteristic of non-Aryan tribes are being gradually abandoned by the Nama-Ṣúdra. Widow marriage, formerly universally practised, has within a few years been prohibited, and the Chaṇḍální bride, who in old days walked, is now carried in state in a palanquin. Although he has adopted many Hindu ideas, the Chaṇḍál still retains his partiality for spirits and swine's flesh.

After the birth of a male child, the Chaṇḍál mother is ceremonially unclean for ten days, but for a female child the period varies from seven to nine days. Should the child die within eighteen months, a Ṣráddha is observed after three nights, but should it live longer, the obsequial ceremony is held at the expiration of ten days. On the sixth day after the birth of a boy, the Shashṭhí Pújah is performed, but omitted if the child be a girl. Whenever a Chamáín, or Ghulám Káyasth female, is not at hand, the Chaṇḍální acts as midwife, but she never takes to this occupation as a means of livelihood.

The Chaṇḍáls retain many peculiar religious customs, survivals of an ancient and time-worn cultus. At the Vástu Pújah on the Paush "Sankránt," when the earth personified is worshipped, the Chaṇḍáls celebrate an immemorial rite, at which the caste Bráhman does not officiate. They pound rice, work it up into a thin paste, and colouring it red or yellow, dip a reversed cup into the mess, and stamp circular marks with it on the ground around their cottages and on the flanks of the village cattle. This observance, not practised by any other caste, has for its object the preservation of the village and its property from the enmity of malignant spirits.

Throughout Bengal the month of Srávan (July-August) is sacred to the goddess of serpents, Manasa Deví, and on the thirtieth day, the Chaṇḍáls in Eastern Bengal celebrate the "Náo-Ka-Pújah," literally boat worship, or as it is more generally called, "Chaṇḍál Kúdní," the Chaṇḍáls rejoicing. As its name imports, the occasion is a very festive one, in Silhet being observed as the great holiday of the year. The gods and goddesses of the Hindu mythology are paraded, but the queen of the day is the great snake goddess, Manasa Deví. A kid, milk, plantains, and sweetmeats are offered to her, and the day is wound up with processions of boats, boat races, feasting, and drinking. On the Dacca river the sight is singularly interesting. Boats manned by twenty or more men, and decked out with flags, are paddled by short rapid strokes to the sound of a monotonous chaunt, and as the goal is neared, loud cries and yells excite the contending crews to fresh exertions. The Kuṭí Muhammadans compete with the Chaṇḍáls for prizes contributed by wealthy Hindu gentlemen.

The Chaṇḍál is one of the most lovable of Bengalis. He is a merry, careless fellow, very patient and hard working, but always ready, when his work is done, to enjoy himself. Chaṇḍáls are generally of very dark complexions, nearer black than brown, of short muscular figures and deep expanded chests. A few are handsome, but their dark sparkling eyes and merry laugh make ample amends for their generally plain features. Singing is a favourite amusement, and a Chaṇḍál crew is rarely without some musical instrument with which to enliven the evening after the toils of the day. When young, the Chaṇḍál is very vain of his personal appearance, always wearing his hair long, and when in holiday attire, combing, oiling, and arranging it in the most winsome fashion known. Many individuals among them are tall and muscular, famed as clubmen and watchmen. During the anarchy that accompanied the downfall of the Maghal power, the rivers of Bengal swarmed with river Thugs, or Ḍákáíts, who made travelling unsafe, and inland trade impossible. The Chaṇḍáls furnished the majority of these miscreants, but since their dispersion the Chaṇḍál has become a peaceable and exemplary subject of the English Government.

DHOBÁ, DHOBÍ, DHÁVAKA.

The polite term for a washerman in Bengali is Sabhá-sundar, and is in common use among the people; but in Sanskrit it is Rajaka.

In Eastern Bengal the caste has two great divisions (Ṣreṇí), Ṣíta, and Ráma; the former claiming to be the descendants of the washermen of Ṣíta, the latter of the washermen of Ráma. The two divisions eat and drink together, but never intermarry. There is only one title (Padaví) among them, Ṣákalya, derived from the name of a Muní, whose sons, owing to a curse, became degraded washermen. In Dacca, moreover, they have only one gotra, the Aliman.

The Dhobí is reckoned as vile, because he washes the puerperal garments, which, according to Hindu ideas, is the occupation of the outcast and most abandoned races. The Dhobí, notwithstanding, assumes many airs, and lays down a fanciful standard of rank to suit his pleasure. Thus in Bikrampúr he declines to wash for the Paṭní, Ṛishi, Bhúinmálí, and Chaṇḍál, but works for the Sáha, because the Nápit does so, and for all classes of fishermen. He further refuses to attend at the marriages of any Hindus but those belonging to the Nava-Ṣákha, or nine clean castes; and under no circumstances will he wash the clothes worn at funeral ceremonies.

The village Dhobí often holds Chákarán land, receiving presents at all village festivals.

The presence of the washerman is indispensable at marriages of the higher classes, as on the bridal morn he sprinkles the bride and bridegroom with water collected in the palms of his hands from the grooves of his washing board (Páṭ), and, after the bride has been daubed with turmeric, the Dhobí must touch her to signify that she is purified.

Dhobies have a Bráhman of their own, who officiates at all religious ceremonies. As a class they are Varishnava in creed, a few only being Ṣákta.

Those resident in the city, numbering about two hundred and fifty families, intermarry freely with their brethren living in villages. Bright colours being admired by washermen, the fashionable bridal dress is either red or yellow, rarely white; while the bridal crown (Mukuṭa) is of the same colour as the dress. The marriage ceremonies are in every respect the same as those of other Ṣúdra castes.

The city Dhobies have no permanent union (Dal); but whenever disputes arise, or their interests are endangered, they quickly form one, reserving for such occasions a headman, or Parámánik.

Among the natives of Bengal the washerman, like the barber, is proverbially considered untrustworthy, and when the former says the clothes are almost ready he is not to be believed. The Bengali Dhobi is not so dissipated as his Hindustani namesake, whose drinking propensities are notorious, but he is said to indulge frequently in Gánjha smoking.

The washerman is hardworking, regular in his hours of labour, and generally one of the first workmen seen in the early morning, making use of a small native bullock, as the donkey does not thrive in Bengal, for carrying his bundles of clothes to the outskirts of the town. He cannot, however, be said to be a careful washerman, as he treats fine and coarse garments with equal roughness, but for generations the Dacca Dhobies have been famous for their skill, when they choose to exert it, and early in this century it was no uncommon thing for native gentlemen to forward valued articles of apparel from Calcutta to be washed and restored by them. At the present day, Dhobies from Kochh Bihár, and other distant places, are sent while young to learn the trade at Dacca.

For washing muslins and other cotton garments, well or spring water is alone used; but if the articles are the property of a poor man, or are commonplace, the water of the nearest tank or river is accounted sufficiently good. The following is their mode of washing. The cloth is first cleansed with soap, or fuller's earth, then steamed, steeped in earthern vessels filled with soap-suds, beaten on a board, and finally rinsed in cold water. Indigo is in as general use as in England, for removing the yellowish tinge, and whitening the material. The water of the wells and springs, bordering on the red laterite formation, met with on the north of the city, has been for centuries celebrated, and the old bleaching fields of the European factories were all situated in this neighbourhood. Dhobies use rice starch before ironing and folding clothes, for which reason no Bráhman canper form his devotions, or enter a temple, without first of all rinsing in water the garment he has got back from the washerman.

Various plants are used by Dhobies to clarify water, such as the "Nir-malí" (*Strychnos potatorum*), "Pui" (*Basella*), "Nágphaní" (*Cactus Indicus*), and several plants of the Mallow family. Alum, though not much valued, is sometimes used.

The Dhobí often gives up his caste trade, and follows the profession of a writer, messenger, or collector of revenue (Tahsíldár), and it is an old native tradition that a Bengali Dhobí was the first interpreter the English factory of Calcutta had, while it is further stated, that our early commercial transactions were solely carried on through the agency of low caste natives. The Dhobí, however, will never engage himself as an indoor servant in the house of an European.

DOAI, DOÍ.

This is a low, mixed class of cultivators, met with in various parts of Eastern Bengal, especially along the banks of the Lakhya river. They either reside in villages separate from those of the Hindus, or in outlying quarters of Hindu villages, along with the Paṭní, Ṛishi, and Bhúinmálí. About a hundred and fifty houses inhabited by them are scattered throughout the jungle at Palás on the Lakhya; but they are still more numerous farther up the river, at Toke and Kapásia, while in the whole Dacca district they occupy about 1,500 houses, with a population of nearly 6,500 individuals. None of the caste are met with farther south than Nángalbandh, opposite old Sunnárgáon, and they place their original home at, or near, Susang Durgápúr, in Mymensingh.

The Doaí of the Eastern districts is distinct from the "Dauyi," described by Buchanan,[1] as the most depraved of the Kochh, and the most impure of the Rájbansí. They are not mentioned by Colonel Dalton. The Doaís of Rangpúr, Mr. Damant, C.S., states, have no Bráhmans, but employ members of their own caste as Purohits, and any stray Bairágí as Guru, the Ṣráddha being held on the eleventh day after decease. They eat pork and drink spirits, while their principal occupation is carrying palankins and fishing. The physiognomy of the "Dauyi" differs from that of the Kochh, with whom they have no tribal affinity.

The Doaí of Dacca are quite different, being undoubtedly a composite race. Some are short, squat men, with an Indo-Chinese type of features; others are tall and muscular, with large black eyes, aquiline noses, and a profusion of hair on the face, while their complexion is of a light brown. The average height of five adult men, taken at random, was five feet three and a half inches, a standard the same as the average of Bengalis.

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[1] Vol. iii, pp. 545, 586.

There can be little doubt that the Doaís are allied to the Hajaṇg, a mongrel Garo tribe,[1] inhabiting villages in the Mymensingh and Silhet districts, bordering on the Garo hills, who, under Bráhmanical influence, have broken off from their brethren the hillmen. The Doaí are also known as "Lakhí-putra," or children of Lakshmí, and Páṭia Dás, from the matting (Páṭ), which they make. The derivation of the word Doaí is obscure. Hodgson gives "Doí" as the Bodo for water, and it may be that on becoming fishermen this name was given, as Jaliyá has been to the Bengali fisher tribes. At the present day the Doaís have become so thoroughly Hinduized, and have so completely lost their original language and customs, that very little information can be got from them. They have Patit Bráhmans of their own, who confess to having been their priests for three generations only. The weddings and funerals are the same as those of other low caste Hindus, the Ṣráddha being likewise celebrated on the thirtieth day. The Doaí will drink from the vessels of the lowest Ṣúdras, but even the Bhúinmálí is disgraced if he drinks from theirs. They disavow the use of pork and spirits, although their neighbours affirm that indulgence in both is universal. They all belong to one gotra, the Aliman, and their sole title is Dás. Disputes are settled by a headman, Pradhán, whose office is not hereditary.

Their religious festivals are Hindu, the majority being Vaishnavas, while a Gosáin or Bairágí is the Guru. Before felling a Gujálí or Ṣál tree, offerings are made to Chandí, or Durga, the Bráhman officiating; while (if their word is to be believed) no religious rite is ever celebrated without the guidance of the family priest.

Living as they always do on the edge of the forest, they cut firewood for the market, but never become fishermen for profit, nor engage themselves as boatmen. Having lost their ancestral language, they occasionally learn to read and write Bengali, being employed as Tahsíldárs, or rent-collectors, by landlords; while the illiterate become watchmen and messengers. The villagers assert that the Doaí only speak Bengali, never using words foreign to the vernacular.

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[1] Doi is a division of the Kochh-Mandai.

ḌÔM, ḌOMṚÁ, ḌOMA, ḌOMBRA, ḌAMA.

There is a painful interest attaching to this helot race, which has for ages been treated as the very dregs of humanity, and condemned to perform the most degrading and disgusting servile duties. That the race is not of Aryan descent is evident from the prevalent type of physique and complexion, but its exact position among the families of the Indian peninsula is still undetermined. Dr. Caldwell[1] connects the Ḍôms, Pariahs, and Chaṇḍálas with the Dravidian race, and conjectures that prior to the Aryan invasion they were reduced to the condition of slaves; but another theory allies them with certain aboriginal races inhabiting India anterior to the Dravidian migration, who took refuge from the intruders in mountain fastnesses and pestilential jungles, which races have been included by Lenormant[2] in "la race mélanienne aux chevaux plats et non laineux," analogous to the blacks of Australia. It is remarkable that in Kamáon the Ḍôms, said to be of the same lineage as the Ráwat, or Rájí, a tribe of undoubted aboriginal blood, whom they serve as slaves, differ from their masters in having curly hair inclining to wool, and in being all extremely dark.[3] The Ḍôm of Bengal, however, has none of these characteristics. His hair is long, lank, and coarse, while his complexion is oftener of a brown than a black hue.

Sir H. Elliot,[4] on the other hand, traces the original home of the Ḍôm to the banks of the Rohini in Oudh, but the correctness of this supposition has been disputed, and a possible connection between the Ḍôm and Donwár, or Rájput cultivators of Gorakhpúr, has been hazarded.[5] Buchanan, again, identified Ḍôms with the Ḍomtikár, a division of Sarwaria Bráhmans.[6]

There can be no doubt, however, that the term Ḍôm is indiscriminately applied to many predatory and outcast tribes, who have nothing in common, but their degraded position in the eyes of the people. For instance, in the valley of the Brahmaputra, boatmen and fishermen are always called Ḍôms, or Ḍôm-Paṭní; in Chittagong Ḍôm is the title of all fishermen, irrespective of caste; in Oudh of sweepers; and in Arakan of pagoda slaves.[7] The genuine Ḍôms have, moreover, broken up into many tribes. The Maghaiyá Ḍôms are professional thieves, with the same vagabond propensities as the gypsies; the Múshahar Ḍôms of Bihár are hunters who wander throughout

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[1] "Grammar of the Dravidian Languages," p. 546.

[2] "Manuel d'Histoire Ancienne," tome iii, 401.

[3] "Asiatic Researches," xvi, 160.

[4] "Supplemental Glossary," i, 84.

[5] "Notes on the Races of Avadh." By P. Carnegy, p. 24.

[6] "Eastern India," ii, 453.

[7] "Journal A.S. of Bengal," x, 679.

Eastern Bengal shooting tigers, and trapping wild animals; and the town, or scavenger, Ḍôm, or Murda-farosh, is the carrier and undertaker employed at the burial of the dead, with whom Ḍôms manufacturing mats, baskets, and drums, repudiate all relationship.

According to the census returns of 1872, there were in Bengal 222,899 Ḍôms, in Bihar 100,114, and in Orissa 10,615. It is probable, however, that under this head have been included other outcast tribes, as the Paṭní, for in Dacca, where 641 are returned, it is certain that not a single real Ḍôm is domiciled outside the city, while within its limits not more than twenty houses are occupied by them, which indicates a population of about a hundred souls. A tradition survives among the Dacca Ḍôms, that in the days of the Nawábs their ancestors were brought from Patna for employment as executioners (Jallád) and disposers of the dead, hateful duties which they perform at the present day. On the paid establishment of each magistracy a Ḍôm hangman is borne, who officiates whenever sentence of death is carried out. On these occasions he is assisted by his relatives, and as the bolt is drawn, shouts of "Doháí Mahárání!" or "Doháí Judge Sáhib!" are raised to exonerate them from all blame.

By all classes of Hindus the Ḍôm is regarded with both disgust and fear, not only on account of his habits being abhorrent and abominable, but also because he is believed to have no humane or kindly feelings. To those, however, who view him as a human being, the Ḍôm appears as an improvident and dissolute man, addicted to sensuality and intemperance, but often an affectionate husband and indulgent father. As no Hindu can approach a Ḍôm, his peculiar customs are unknown, and are therefore said to be wicked and accursed.

For example, it is universally believed in Bengal that Ḍôms do not bury or burn their dead, but dismember the corpse at night, like the inhabitants of Tibet, placing the pieces in a pot, and sinking them in the nearest river or reservoir. This horrid idea probably originated from the old Hindu law which compelled the Dôms to bury their dead at night. According to their own account, which must, however, be accepted with hesitation, the dead are cast into a river, while the bodies of the rich or influential are buried. When the funeral is ended each man bathes, and successively touches a piece of iron, a stone, and a lump of dry cow-dung, afterwards making offerings of rice and spirits to the manes of the deceased, while the relatives abstain from flesh and fish for nine days. On the tenth day a swine is slaughtered, and its flesh cooked and eaten, after which quantities of raw spirits are drunk until every body is intoxicated.

Their marriage ceremonies are also peculiar. The guests being assembled on a propitious day, fixed by a Bráhman, the bridegroom's father takes his son on his knee, and sitting down in the centre of the "Marocha" opposite the bride's father, who is holding his daughter in a similar posture, repeats the names of his ancestors for seven generations, while the bride's father runs over his for three. They then call God to witness the ceremony, and the bridegroom's father addressing the other, asks him, "Have you lost your daughter ?" The answer being in the affirmative, a similar interrogation and reply from the opposite party terminates the service.

The boy bridegroom then advances, smears the bride's forehead with "Sindúr" or red lead, the symbol of married life, takes her upon his knee, and finally carries her within doors. Like all aboriginal races, Ḍôms are very fond of gaudy colours, the bridal dress consisting of yellow or red garments for the female, and a yellow cloth with a red turban for the male.

In some parts of Bengal the Ḍôms have a priest called Dharma-Paṇḍit; in Bihár Ḍôm-Bráhman, but the Dacca community have not as yet procured the services of one. They are not on this account less attentive to their religious duties. Many Ḍôms belong to the "Panthá," or doctrines of a certain Súpan, or Ṣobhana, Bhagat, a famed Guru of theirs; while others are Hariṣ-chandís[1] from a Rájah Hariṣ-chandra,[2] who was so generous that he gave away all his wealth in charity, and was reduced to such straits that he took service with a Ḍôm, who treated him kindly. In return the Rájah converted the whole tribe to his religion, which they have faithfully followed ever since.

The principal festival of the Ḍôms is the Ṣrávannia Pújah, observed in the month of that name, corresponding to July and August, when a pig is sacrificed, and its blood caught in a cup. This cup of blood, along with one of milk and three of spirits, are offered to the Deity. Again, on a dark night of Bhádra (August) they offer a pot of milk, four of spirits, a fresh cocoanut, a pipe of tobacco, and a little Indian hemp, to Harí Rám, after which swine are slaughtered, and a feast celebrated.

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[1] Wilson's "Religious Sects," i, 181.

[2] It is of this Rájah that the natives of Bengal tell the following story, so strangely like that narrated in the xviiith chapter of the Koran regarding Moses and Joshua. He and his Rání, wandering in the forest almost starved, caught a fish and broiled it on a wood fire. She took it to the river to wash off the ashes, but on touching the water the fish revived, and swam away. At the present day a fish called Kálbosa (*Labeo calbasu*), of black colour and yellow flesh, is identified with the historical one, and no low caste Hindu will touch it. In Hindustan the following couplet is quoted, the moral being the same as that of the English proverb, "Misfortunes never come singly."

"Rájah Nal par bihat pare
Bhúne machhle jal men tire."

Although the Ḍôm eats the flesh of swine, domestic fowls, and ducks, he abstains from beef, and, in Assam, from buffalo meat. He will eat with a Muhammadan in his house, but refuses to touch, or perhaps more correctly denies in public that he ever touches, food brought from a Christian's table. He will, moreover, feast upon the leavings of any Hindu dinner, except that of the Dhobí, who in his eyes is utterly vile from washing the Chhaṭhi garments after childbirth.

In Eastern Bengal the Ḍômni, or female Ḍôm, only performs as a musician at the weddings of her own people, it being considered derogatory for her to do so at any others. At home the Ḍômni manufactures baskets and rattles for children.

The presence of the Ḍôm at any gathering of pure Hindus defiles them all, but his services at the funeral pyre, when the whole assemblage is unclean, was formerly essential. Of late years, at any rate in Dacca, household servants carry the body to the burning "Ghát," where the pyre constructed by them is lighted by the nearest relative.

A curious custom, observed by all castes throughout Bengal, has the Ḍôm as a participator. Whenever an eclipse of the sun or moon occurs, each Hindu householder places at his door a few copper *paisa*, which are regarded as the perquisite of the Ḍôm.[1]

The Áchárjí Bráhman has recently been claiming this oblation as his due; but it is admitted on all hands that formerly he would have spurned the gift. If the worship of Ráhu is acknowledged to have been adopted by the Bráhmans from the Dosáds, may not the presentation of offerings to the Ḍôms be a survival of a cultus of which this aboriginal race were the recognised exponents.

It is a strange fact that Ḍôms have occasionally raised themselves to positions of distinction and authority. One Nábhají Ḍôm wrote, in the sixteenth century, the Bhakta Málá, a treatise highly valued by the Rámávats; and another, 'Alí Bakhsh Ḍôm, became governor of Rasúlábád, one of the districts of Oudh.[2]

DOSÁD, DOSÁDH.

This semi-Hinduized aboriginal tribe is not numerous in Eastern Bengal, and in the city of Dacca there are not more than fifteen or twenty families of them who lay claim to a more dignified position than is conceded in their native districts of

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[1] Wilson's "Religious Sects," i, 60.

[2] Sleeman's "Journey through the Kingdom of Oude," i, 317.

Tirhut and Mungír. They are employed as house bearers, syces, pankhá coolies, and porters. As a rule the young men are handsome, of a yellowish-brown complexion, with wide expanded nostrils, and the tip of the nose slightly *retroussé*.

Dosáds claim to be descended from the soldiers of Bhím Sen, and to be allied to the Cherú-Chaṇḍáls, while at least one of their deities connect them with the Puraniyá district. The following six subdivisions are recognised:—

Maghaiyá,
Palawár,
Kúrí,
Kanaujiyá,
Keot,
Kúril.

The majority of Dosáds belong to the first, a fact which Buchanan thought indicated that Magadha was their native land. In Maithila, where the Dosáds are styled Hazárás, three small tribes, known as Kámar, or beef-eaters, Palawár, and Kúrin, had separated from the parent stock and been excommunicated. By many Bahaliyás the claim of being Dosáds is insisted on, and in Bengal the Bahaliyá and Dosád eat and smoke together.

In Bihár, Dosád has come to be synonymous with Chaukídár, as all the watchmen belong to that tribe. Although Dosáds are no longer employed as executioners and carriers of dead bodies, they are often found feeding pigs and curing pork.

The most interesting point about the Dosáds, however, is their peculiar religious ceremonies. The demon Ráhu is their patron deity, and in fulfilment of vows, sacrifices are offered to him, when a Bhagat or Chaṭiyá presides. Dr. Buchanan regarded the worship of Ráhu as a survival of an early aboriginal cultus, which the Dosáds were one of the last to give up, and, as they were found reluctant to abandon it, the Bráhmans transformed Ráhu into an "Asura," or demon, and placed him in their Pantheon. Whenever the worship is to be performed in Bengal, priests are procured from Bihár, who are always Dosáds. A ladder, made with sides of green bamboos and rungs of sword-blades, is raised in the midst of a pile of burning mangoe wood, through which the Bhagat walks barefooted, and ascends the ladder without injury. Swine of all ages, a ram, wheaten flour, and rice-milk (Khír), are offered up, after which the worshippers partake of a feast, and drink enormous quantities of fiery spirits.

Next in importance to the worship of Ráhu is that of various deified heroes, in honour of whom huts are erected in different parts of the country. At Sherpúr, near Patna, is the shrine of Gauraiá, a Dosád bandit chief, to which members of all castes resort, the clean making offerings of meal, the unclean sacrificing a swine, or several young pigs, and pouring out libations of spirit on the ground. In the Taráí, Salesh, said to have been the porter of Bhím Sen, but afterwards a formidable robber, is invoked, a pig being killed, and rice, ghi, sweetmeats, and spirits offered. In other districts Choár Mal is supplicated, and a ram sacrificed. In Mirzápúr, the favoured deity is Bhindáchal; in Patna it is either Bándí, Kárú, Bhairav, Jagdá Má, Kálí, Deví, Patanesvarí, or Ketú.

It is worthy of notice that in none of these shrines are there any idols, and that the officiating priests are always Dosáds, who minster to the Súdra castes frequenting them.

The Sákádvípa Bráhmans act as the hereditary Purohits of the Dosáds, and fix a favourable day for weddings, and the naming of children. To the great indignation of other tribes these Bráhmans assume the aristocratic title of Misra, which properly belongs to the Kanaujiyá order. The Guru, called Gosáin, Faqír, Vaishnava, or simply Sádhu, abstains from all manual labour, and from intoxicating drugs. His text book is the "Gyán-ságar,"[1] or Sea of Knowledge, believed to have been written by Vishnu himself, in his form of Chatur-bhuja, or the four-armed. It inculcates the immaterial nature of God (Nirákára), which is regarded by the Bráhmans as a most pernicious heresy.

Dosáds follow the ordinary Hindu ceremonies at marriages, but they often take more than one wife, and the Sagáí, or Levirate marriage custom, is not unknown at the present day.

The female Dosád is unclean for six days after confinement, when she bathes, but is not permitted to touch the household utensils till the twelfth day, when a feast, Bárahí, is given, and she becomes ceremonially clean.

During the Muhammadan rule in Bengal, Dosáds, or Bahaliyás, served in the army, and during the Nawábship of 'Alí Vardí Khán, the native historian[2] stigmatises their licentious conduct as a disgrace to the government.

From the days of William Hamilton[3] it has been generally believed that in the early period of our military history, "Bengali Sepoys almost exclusively filled several of our battalions, and distinguished themselves as brave and active soldiers;" but, as pointed out by Mr. Shore,[4] for years before the battle of Plassey, the troops in Bengal were chiefly composed of Hindustání recruits enlisted there. Futhermore, the

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[1] Literally Jnána-sagara.

[2] "A Narrative of the Transactions in Bengal," translated by F. Gladwin, p. 177.

[3] Vol. i, 95.

[4] Shore, F. J. ii, 432.

Sepoys who served under Lord Clive were, according to Mr. Reade, Dosáds,[1] and they cannot be regarded as Bengalís in the true and ordinary sense of the word.

The majority of Dosáds belong to the Ṣrí Náráyana sect, but others follow the "Panthá," or doctrines, of Kabír Sáhib, Tulasí Dás, Gorakhnáth, or Nának Sháh.

GAḌARIYÁ.

In the census returns only 604 members of this shepherd caste are entered as resident in Bengal proper, while in Bihár 87,017 are enrolled. Only fifteen families are domiciled in Dacca, being employed in making blankets, hence the name Kammalí often bestowed on them.

The Gaḍariyá is reckoned higher in rank than the Ahír, and equal to the Majrotí and Kṛishnaut Goálás. Buchanan, further, identifies them with the Kuramba, or Kuraba, of Maisúr, who are likewise shepherds.

The Gaḍariyá have the customary seven subdivisions, but the most important are the Níkhar and Dhengár. A few, who have become Muhammadans, are styled Chak, the Hindi for a shepherd, or Chikwá, a butcher, who slaughters animals, but not bullocks. The Bakrá-Kasáí, or goat butcher, is another family who secretly kill cattle.

In Bihár and Bengal this caste is generally reckoned a clean one, but in Puraniyá it is impure. The Gaḍariyá is often found working as a domestic servant, refusing, however, to carry bathing water for his master, or to rinse his body clothes after bathing. He cannot, without incurring expulsion, serve as a cowherd with any but Gaḍariyá masters. He may, however, take household service with any class, even with Christians. Among themselves old men are addressed as Bhagat, or Chaudharí, young men as Rám. Many of this caste are followers of Daryá Dás, a Gaḍariyá,[2] who founded a corrupt Vaishnava sect, abstaining from touching fish, flesh, or spirits. His followers do not worship him as a deity, but simply regard him as their Guru.

The caste Guru is usually a Dasnámí ascetic, the Purohit a Kanaujiyá, but oftener a low Joshí Bráhman.

Gaḍariyá women are unclean from seven to twelve days after confinement, when a feast called "Chhaṭhiyán," is given to friends and relatives. The Levirate and widow marriage customs are still observed by the caste.

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[1] "Note on Inferior Castes, &c," p. 16.

[2] Buchanan, i, p. 499, states that he was a Darzí.

When a flock of sheep is sold, the Gaḍariyá keeps back a ram, and having assembled his brethren, sacrifices it to Banjárí, after which its flesh is eaten by those who follow the Ṣaiva ritual.

Gaḍariyás make wethers themselves, and like the Highland shepherds are very partial to "Peraunti," or "niceties," which they recommend as a very strengthening delicacy.

GANDHA-BANIK.

This caste claims to be the same as the Banyá of Hindustan, and traces its descent from Chandra Bhava, commonly called Chand Saudágar, "an accomplished man, the son of Koṭíṣ-Vara, the lord of crores," and Sáha Saudágar, mentioned in the Padma Purána. Although this ancient lineage is assumed, the caste no longer wears the Bráhmanical thread; and, instead of mourning like the Agarwálá Banyás for thirteen, mourns like pure Ṣúdras for thirty days.

Another story of their origin is current. Kubja, the hunchbacked slave girl of Rájah Kaṉsa, was carrying home spices and sandal wood when Kṛishna first met her. The son born of their subsequent liaison was naturally the first spice seller, and the father of all Gandha-baniks.

In Bengal this caste numbers 127,178 individuals, being most numerous in Burdwan, 32,105, Murshídábád 11,016, Bírbhúm 10,165, Nadiyá 8,010, and Dacca 6,634. In the city of Dacca alone from one hundred and fifty to two hundred houses, representing a population of about a thousand, are occupied by them.

The Gandha-baniks of Eastern Bengal have four Ṣreṇí, or subdivisions, namely, Aút, Desá, Sankhá, and Chhattís, or thirty-six; the three last intermarrying and eating together. The Aút has a family called Dhaula, the Desá one named Dhallár, after villages where they resided, while other Ṣreṇí are to be found in the neighbourhood of Calcutta and Murshídábád. The titles of the Aút Ṣreṇí are Dutta, Dhur, Kar, Nág, Dhár, and Dé; of the Desá, Sáha, Sádhú, Laha, and Kahn. The caste has six powerful dals, or unions, in Dacca city, the Dalpatís, or headmen being persons of great respectability. In one of the "dals" a curious marriage custom, said to have been observed by their forefathers when they first entered Bengal, is still preserved.

The bridegroom climbs a "Champa"[1] tree, and sits there while the bride is carried round on a stool seven times. Should no tree be available, a Champá log, placed beneath a canopy, or a platform made of Chàmpá wood planks, is substituted and ornamented with gilt flowers resembling the real Champá blossoms.

The other "dals," who follow the usual Ṣúdra marriage service, privately associate with this one, but never publicly.

Bridal dresses are made of yellow silk (Cheolí) with a red striped border, the bride wearing hers for ten days after marriage.

The large majority of Gandha-baniks are Vaishnavas, a few Ṣaivas.

All Bengalí shopkeepers worship Gandheṣvarí, a form of Durgá, every morning and evening; but on the full moon of Baisakh (April-May) the Gandha-baniks hold a special service in her honour, arranging in a pyramidal form the weights, scales, drugs, and account books, and placing in front a goblet daubed over with red lead. The caste Bráhman then comes and repeats several invocations, soliciting the favour of the goddess during the ensuing year.

The Gandha-banik is a spice seller, or "Épicier," as well as a druggist. He will not sell rice, vegetables, salt, oil, or spirits, but he will almost every other grocery. He is often called by the Hindi term "Pansárí," which signifies a dealer in groceries, spices, and herbs. Their comparatively high position among Ṣúdra castes is owing to the circumstance that sandal wood and spices, essential for Hindu religious rites, can only be procured at their shops.

The Gandha-banik obtains his drugs and spices direct from Calcutta, or from the place where they are produced, and buys quinine, iodide of potassium, and sarsaparilla from English druggists. He also sells tin, lead, pewter, copper, and iron, and retails, if licensed, saltpetre, sulphur, and gunpowder, as well as chemicals used by pyrotechnists, and dispenses medicines ordered by Kabírájs. Although Gandha-baniks possess no pharmacopœia, and are ignorant of chemistry, they display wonderful sharpness in distinguishing salts and minerals. Every Gandha-banik has the reputation of being a doctor, and like the druggists of Europe, he is often consulted, and prescribes for trifling ailments. Drugs, at the present day, are sold by apothecary's weight, other articles by the bazar weight of eighty sicca to a *ser*. Kabírájs, however, still use the old Hindu weights, "Pala," "Ratí," "Másha," and "Jau." Boys able to read and write Bengali are apprenticed to a Gandha banik, who makes him familiar with the appearance, names, and prices of drugs, which, it is said, amount in a genuine Pansárí's shop to three hundred and sixty kinds. Most of these go to form the different kinds of Páṭ, or alterative medicine, greatly relied on in Hindu therapeutics. The Gandha-banik is expected to know the proper ingredients in each Páṭ, as well as the proper quantity of each. In the preparation of pills, goat's milk, or lime-juice and water, are used, but by some druggists the juice of the Ghí-Kuwár (*Aloe perfoliata*[1]) is preferred.

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[1] Champaka (*Michelia champaca*).

The Gandha-banik retails "Charas," Bháng, opium, and Gánjha, but some have scruples about selling the last, and employ a Muhammadan servant to do so. Most of the shops for the sale of Gánjha, however, are leased by members of this caste, who pay a Súnṛí, or Muhammadan, to manage them.

GANDHÍ.

The perfumer, who may belong to any caste, or religion, extracts the essences of flowers by maceration and subsequent distillation. The scents generally preferred are those of the "Champa" (*Michelia champaca*), "Belá" (*Jasminum Zambac*), "Vakula," or "Maulsarí" (*Mimusops Elengi*), and "Júhí" (*Jasminum auriculatum*).

The 'Aṭr of roses and "Guláb," or rosewater, prepared in Dacca are inferior in quality to those made at Ghází́púr.

GAṆRÁR, GANDHA-KÁRA, GANDHA-ÁRA, GARWÁL.

This caste, more generally known as Shikárí, or hunters, is called by Bengalis Gandhá Pál, Madhu Mayara, or Mayara Gaṇrár, while their villages bear the name of Shikárí-ṭola, or Shikárí-páṛá.

In the census returns the Gaṇrár is correctly classified along with the Madak, or Mayara, among the castes engaged in preparing cooked food. In Bengal the caste consists of 14,843 persons, scattered in small numbers throughout the province, but grouped in the following districts: Murshídábád (2,384); Nadiyá (2,268); twenty-four pergunnahs (1,847); and Dacca (1,611).

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[1] Sanskrit "Ghṛita-Kumárí."

There can be no doubt that the Gaṇrár caste is the same as the Madhya-deshí Kándús of Bihár. A tradition still survives, that, five generations ago, their ancestors were brought to Dacca by the Muhammadan government from Súrya-gaṛhí in Bhágalpúr, to act as rowers on board the imperial dispatch boats (Chhíp).

The caste is most numerous in Dacca, but they are also met with in Silhet, Tipperah, and Mymensingh, working as cultivators. Buchanan mentions that the Gaṇrár of Rangpúr originally came from Dacca, two hundred families being in his time domiciled along the banks of the Brahmaputra.

In former days the Gaṇrár had the reputation of being the bravest of all boatmen, and the river Dákáíts never dared to attack boats manned by them. Nowadays, they are great traders, carrying in their large cargo boats, called "Palwár," rice, cotton, and linseed, to Calcutta, Bhagwán-golah, and other centres of trade. They generally do business on their own account, and being honest and straightforward, obtain advances of money on most favourable terms from the bankers.

Gaṇrárs use the three-pronged harpoon (Ṭenṭa) with wonderful dexterity, and rarely miss an object within forty yards. If an alligator takes to carrying off bathers from a "Ghát," the Gaṇrárs are employed to kill it. When the brute is seen basking on a sandbank the sportsman crawls up, and strikes it with a harpoon, to the shaft of which a rope and a float are attached. As soon as the animal is hit, it takes to the water, the Gaṇrárs following in a boat, and every time it rises for air spears are implanted, and it is rare for an alligator to escape from these active and persevering assailants.

Gaṇrárs also kill a great many Gangetic porpoises (Sús) for the sake of the oil, which is in great repute for burning, and as an embrocation for rheumatism. It usually sells for three to five rupees a "*man.*" Turtle are frequently harpooned for food, and turtle eggs are deemed a great delicacy by these sportsmen.

Gaṇrárs work at almost any trade, but in Dacca nothing will induce them to cultivate the soil. The women are principally employed in parching grain, and selling it in bázárs.

They all belong to one gotra, the Aliman, and the Purohit is a Patit Bráhman. The caste is a Vaishnava one, but deities unknown to the Bráhmanical Pantheon are worshipped. Like most of the low castes they set afloat the "Beṛá" in honour of Khwájah Khizr, and pay especial adoration to Sat Náráyaṇa. Moreover, on the last day of Ṣrávan they sacrifice a turtle to Manasa Deví, the goddess of snakes, and make offerings in the month of Paush to Buṛa-Buṛí.

The Gaṇrárs of Dacca, through Bráhmanical influence, have relinquished the worship of Khala-Kumári, who is regarded by the Gaṇrárs of Rangpúr as the Naiad of the river. This worship, a survival of an earlier cultus, is peculiar to the aboriginal races of Bengal, and like that of Buṛa-Buṛí is only found in the outlying districts, where Hinduism has always been least active and aggressive.

Gaṇrárs rarely eat flesh, but they freely indulge in spirits, and often in Ganjha. At the present day widows do not marry, and the Levirate marriage custom is unknown.[1]

GHAṬAKA.

The Ghaṭaks are Bráhmans engaged in negotiating marriages between families, and each Ṣreṇí, or division, of the sacred order in Bengal, has its recognized staff, upon whom rests the responsibility of arranging suitable marriages, and of preserving the pristine purity of each family belonging to it. The Varendra, Ráṛhí, and Vaidika Bráhmans possess Ghaṭaks distinct from those employed by the Baidyá and Káyath castes, who intermarry with, and act as agents for, the Bráhmans of their own division, but for no others.

The organisation of the society is referred to Ballál Sen, who settled the Ráṛhí Ghaṭaks in Jessore, Báqirganj, and Bikrampúr, where, with the exception of a few who have lately emigrated to Calcutta, they are domiciled at the present day. The Ghaṭak registers of the Ráṛhí Bráhmans, like those of the Kulin Káyaths, go back twenty-three generations, or five hundred years, and, although any Bráhman may become a Ghaṭak, the highest estimation, and the title Pradhán, or chief, is only bestowed on the individual who can show a long and unbroken pedigree of Ghaṭak ancestors.

There are three grades of Ghaṭaks. The first can repeat off-hand the names of all the members of the main, as well as collateral, branches of any family in his particular part of the country; of the families with which they have married, and of the issue of such marriages.

A Ghaṭak possessing a memory as retentive as this is liable at any wedding to be challenged by some youthful aspirant to a " Vichára," or trial of memory, when he must defend the laurels he has won. It is, however, considered not only rash, but unmannerly, for a challenge to be given to an old Ghaṭak, who has for years retained, against all comers, a position of this pre-eminence.

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[1] Vivien de St. Martin is of opinion that the Gaṇrár, the Goṇrhi of Bihár, the Gangai of the Taráí, are remnants of the Gangaridae of Pliny and Ptolemy.

The second grade embraces those Ghaṭaks who can only give the name of the "Kula," or family into which a Bráhman or his relatives have married; while the third comprises such as can only name the Vanṣa, or lineage, to which the Bráhman belongs.

The text books of the Ghaṭaks are the "Darbha-nanda Miṣra Grantha," a Sanskrit treatise intelligible to few, and the "Kulanáma," a work of little value, from its only containing a confused account of the Bráhmans and their subdivisions.

Ghaṭaks never officiate at religious ceremonies, and always employ Purohits for their own requirements. Every Kulin Bráhman in Eastern Bengal is compelled to employ a Ghaṭak in negotiating the marriages of his family, otherwise the whole race of Ghaṭaks revolt and ostracise him. The rich Bráhman Zamíndárs, who are willing and able to pay a large sum for an unexceptionable Kulin bride, often try to convince the Ghaṭaks that their families are of purer and more honourable descent than they actually are. Bribes are often offered to establish the claim, but are rarely accepted. Disputes however, are common. and the Ghaṭaks who favour a claim that is fallacious, and who attend at an unauthorised marriage, fall in the estimation of those who have questioned its soundness, and declined to be present. The scruples of a single Pradhán Ghaṭak often mar the otherwise perfect satisfaction of a parent on the marriage of his son to a family of higher rank than his own; and should all the leaders unite in forbidding the marriage it is impossible for him to win any permanent promotion beyond that laid down in their registers.

Ghaṭaks of similar rank receive equal fees, while at weddings of rich Kulins, at which hundreds attend, the fees are distributed according to a provisional scale, by which Ghaṭaks of the first estimation receive double what the last get. Thus, if the first is given a hundred rupees, the second is entitled to seven-eighths, or eighty-seven rupees; the third to three-fourths, or seventy-five rupees; the fourth to five-eighths, or sixty-two rupees eight anas; and the fifth to a half, or fifty rupees.

At the present day the two most celebrated Pradhán Ghaṭaks are Káli Náth Kabí-ságar, of Kachadía in Bikrampúr, and Grish Chandá Ghaṭaka-Sinha of Kolah, men not only remarkable for their prodigious memories, but for modesty and general information on all subjects connected with Hindu society.

GOÁLÁ.

The Goálá, one of the most composite and ill-defined of castes, is often confounded with the Ahír. In Bihár the names are synonymous, while in each province of Bengal the members claim to be the only pure representatives of the clean cowherds of ancient India.

Goálás known as Sat-Gop in Burdwan and Hughlí are styled Gop-Goálás in Eastern Bengal, and arrogate to themselves a higher position than the Ahír. The Goálá is always included among the clean Ṣúdra castes of Bengal, but he is not the first in rank as among the Marhátás.

According to the census returns of 1872, the pastoral Goála caste numbers in Bengal 625,163 individuals, the agricultural Sat-Gop 635,985, while in Dacca the former are 22,788, the latter only 1,085, but in reality no Sat-Gop exist there, and Goálás are found indiscriminately cultivating the soil, keeping cattle, and buying milk to manufacture Ghí.

The Goálas of Eastern Bengal are all included in the following list:—

1. Gop, or Ghose, Goálá,
2. Ṣáda[1] Goálá,
3. Áhírs—
    (*a.*) Gauriyá or Go-baidyá.
    (*b.*) Mahisha Goálás.
4. Daira, or outcast Goálás.

The Gop-Goálás are the only pure Ṣúdras, and never intermarry with any of the other families. It is probable that the Goálá is the descendant of the Áhír, and the crucial test of purity with all the septs is the boiling of milk before the cream rises, a practice enjoined by the Ṣástras.

The Gop-Goálás, comprising the large majority of the tribe in Bengal, have two gotras, the Aliman and Kaṣyapa; the former being more numerous and more respected than the latter, and although they eat together, a milkman of the Aliman would be dishonoured if he took a wife from the Kaṣyapa gotra. In Mymensingh there is an additional gotra, called Paráṣara, but none of the Dacca Goálás associate or intermarry with it.

The Goálá Bráhman is a Patit, often acting as Purohit to "Sukṛiti-bhanga," or outcast Bráhmans. Milkmen mourn thirty days, and their domestic occurrences are celebrated in the ordinary Ṣúdra fashion. The betrothal ceremony, however, is observed with unusual solemnity. The bridegroom's father buys sweetmeats, garlands of flowers, and sandal-wood paste, which he takes to the house of the Mundle or president of the caste "Pancháít," who immediately summons the Guru, Purohit, and all intimate friends to attend, when each guest is presented with a garland and sweetmeats. The Mundle, accompanied by the party, proceeds to the bride's home. She is formally bedecked with flowers, after which the betrothal is considered complete, and, should any insuperable obstacle supervene to prevent the final marriage, the girl is treated as a widow, and cannot marry any one else. The custom of giving and accepting a marriage fee is not observed by the town Goálás, although it still is by the village.

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[1] Perhaps Sádhu, good.

Gop-Goálás, who have a dairy, sell milk, butter, ghí, curdled milk (Dahí), curds (Chhená), "Khirsá," and "Pát-khirsá," or ripe plantains with milk, and occasionally keep buffaloes for milk, although they object to milk goats.

Three breeds of cows are found in Eastern Bengal, the Bengalí (Deṣí), the Hindustání (Deswalí), a handsome milk-white animal, said to have been introduced by Nawáb Shaístah Khán, and a cross-breed, called "Dú-naslá." A Dacca milch cow rarely gives more than ten *sérs* of milk thrice a day, but this quantity is never got unless the animal is stall fed, for which reason the finest milch cows of the "Deswálí" breed are always kept in sheds. A fodder consisting of vetches (Mash-kaláí[1]), broken rice, rice dust (Kúṇḍá), and salt, is usually given daily, while those who can afford it add rice and oilcake.

A cow is reckoned impure for three weeks after calving, and no Hindu would taste the milk, or Biestings, during that period. Gop-Goálás will not physic or brand cows, as the Áhír does, unless at Ṣráddḥas, when the "Dharm-sánṛ" is branded by them. The following singular treatment of a newly born calf and its mother is in vogue: The calf's mouth is washed out, and the milkman chewing pepper and ginger expectorates into the animal's open mouth. He then cleans the cow's hoofs, and gives her a ball made of ginger, green turmeric, fennel seeds, and molasses, to which a little Indian hemp is usually added.

Like the Áhírs, the Gop-Goálás are very partial to bright, gaudy colours. The bride dresses in red, and on the great annual festivals of the Janmáshṭamí and Gopáshṭamí Goálás appear in red or yellow turbans.

(*a.*) SÁDÁ GOÁLÁS.

This division of milkmen has been outcasted for some economical reason. The bride dresses in white (Sáda), hence perhaps the origin of their name.

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[1] Sanskrit, "Másha" (*Phaseolus radiatus*).

(*b*.) DAIRA GOÁLAS.

This is another outcast division, which became degraded because it makes butter without first scalding the milk. Hence their nickname, "Mogha-Kára."[1] It is generally believed that the name Daira is merely a corruption of the Bengali Dárí, a beard, because many wear beards, having become Muhammadans.

GODNÁ-WÁLÍ.

There being no Natnís in Bengal, Bediyá women travel about the country with a bag, containing a variety of drugs, a cupping horn (Singá), and a scarificator (Náran). They attract attention by bawling "To tattoo, to cup, and to extract worms from decayed teeth!" They also prescribe for female disorders. It is said that small grubs are kept in a bamboo tube, and while the patient's attention is occupied by the talk of the operator, a maggot is presented as if it had been extracted from the hollow tooth. For this trick she receives a suitable fee.

In tattooing the juice of the "Bhangra" plant (*Indigofera linifolia*) and woman's milk are the materials used, and the punctures are made with needles, or the thorns of the Karaundá (*Carissa Carandas*); while the operation is being performed, a very equivocal Mantra is recited to alleviate pain, and prevent any subsequent inflammation.

In respectable Hindu families an old nurse usually tattoos the girls. Nowadays the ordinary tattoo design, either circular or stellate, is made at the top of the nose in the centre of the forehead; formerly the fashionable stain (Ullikhí) was at the same spot, but a line extended along the bridge of the nose, branching out into two curves over each ala.

Tattoo marks were originally distinctive of Hindu females, but Muhammadan women copied them, and it is only since the Farazí revival that they have discontinued the habit.

Chaṇḍál women are often employed to cure goitre by tattooing. A circular spot on the most prominent part of the swelling is punctured with a bamboo spike, and common ink mixed with the sap of the "Kálí Koshijia" rubbed in.

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[1] Sanskrit, Mogha-Karman, one whose actions are fruitless.

HALWAH DÁS.

This is an offshoot from the Kaibartta tribe, and is probably identical with the Chásá Kaibartta and Paráṣara Dás, although the latter protest against this presumption. Very numerous along both banks of the Meghna in the Tipperah and Báqirganj districts, they are rare west of the Lakhya.

The Halwah Dás are chiefly cultivators, weavers of Jámdání muslins, goldsmiths, and stonecutters, while the educated members are clerks and accountants.

The Bráhman of the Halwah Dás and of the cultivating Kaibarttas is the same person; but the priest of the fisher Kaibarttas is distinct. The Ṣúdra servants everywhere work for them. They have three gotras, Aliman, Kaṣyapa, and Madhu Kuliya; and the common patronymics are Dás, Chaudharí, Biṣwas, and Hazrá.

Kálí is chiefly worshipped, but the educated also observe the annual holiday sacred to Sarasvatí, and the cultivators, relinquishing the Ganga Púján, have adopted the Vástu Púján and the Ambuváchí vacation.

The Halwah Dás drink from the water vessels of the clean Ṣúdra Bráhman, but not from those of Patit Bráhmans. Widows never remarry, but the aboriginal crime of eating flesh and drinking spirits is ineradicable.

Among the Halwah Dás there are the same social ranks as with the Paráṣara Dás, the rich endeavouring to assume a higher position, and refusing to give their daughters in marriage to the lower grades.

JALIYÁ.

The occupation of a fisherman is considered a degrading one throughout India, and no Muhammadan will engage in it.[1] For this reason it is usually followed by unclean, and generally non-Aryan, tribes. In Bengal the fisher castes are remarkable for strength, nerve, and independent bearing. The finest examples of Bengali manhood are found among them, and their muscular figures astonish those accustomed to the feeble and effeminate inhabitants of towns. The physique of the Dacca fisherman is more robust than that of the same class on the Hughlí, a fact noticed by Bishop Heber fifty years ago.

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[1] The dishonour clinging to fisher tribes is apparently of Buddhist origin. It is written that "twenty-one kinds of people will, on account of their evil deeds, "fall into the lowest hell. By performing good works, nineteen of these will be "released; but the hunter and the fisherman, let them attend Pagodas, listen "to the law, and keep the five commandments to the end of their lives, still "they cannot be released from their sins." "Buddhaghosás Parables," p. 183, translated from the Burmese by Captain T. Rogers. London, 1870.

The three fisher castes of Eastern Bengal, the Kaibartta, Málo, and Tíyar, are undoubtedly representatives of the prehistoric dwellers in the Gangetic delta. As a rule they are short and squat, of a dark brown colour, often verging upon black. Although Hindus by creed, they are fond of showy garments, of earrings, and of long hair, which is either allowed to hang down in glossy curls on their shoulders, or fastened in a knot at the back of the head. The whiskers and moustaches are thin and scrubby; the lips often thick and prominent; the nose short with the nostrils expanded. The physiognomy indicates good temper, sensuality, and melancholy rather than intelligence and shrewdness. Their religious ceremonies consist of many survivals from an earlier and more barbarous cultus. Bura-Buri is a patron deity with them; Khala Kumárí is the Naiad of their rivers, while Manasa Deví, a sylvan goddess, is worshipped with exceptional honour, and, among the Tíyars, certain mythical heroes have earned immortality, and the adoration of generations of sincere worshippers.

The three fisher castes live in amity with one another, and will even smoke together. The Málo, however, is the lowest in rank, while the Kaibartta and Tíyar still dispute about their relative positions. The Kaibartta, again, is more thoroughly Hinduized than either of the other two. A ridiculous distinction is always cited in proof of the inferior rank of the Málo. The Kaibartta and Tíyar in netting always pass the netting needle from above downwards, working from left to right; while the Málo passes it from below upwards, forming his meshes from right to left. It is remarkable that the same difference is adduced by the Bihár fisherman as a proof of the degraded rank of the Banpar.

No one belonging to a fisher caste will fish with a rod and line, or use a harpoon as the Shikárís do. Bengal fishermen use the sean, drift, trawl, bag, and cast nets. The Kaibarttas, however, will not employ an Uthár or Beṛ net, which are favourites with the Tíyar and Málo.

Nets are made of hemp, never of cotton, and they are steeped in Gáb (*Diospyrus glutinosa*) pounded, and allowed to ferment, by which means the net is dyed of a dark brown colour, becoming after immersion in water almost black. Floats are either made of Sholá, or pieces of bamboo, but dried gourds are occasionally preferred. Sinkers are made of baked clay, or iron.

The following are the common nets in use among Bengali fishermen:—

1. "Jhakí," or "Kshepla," is the circular cast net[1] met with in all Eastern countries. It is usually six or seven cubits in diameter, and is either thrown from the bank of a stream, or from a boat. The circumference is drawn up into loops, or rather puckered, and weighted with iron. It is folded on the left forearm, while the edge and the central string are held by the right hand. By a sudden and forcible swing of the body the net is cast, and, if properly thrown, alights on the surface of the water, forming a complete circle. On its touching the bottom the fisher slowly draws it towards him by the string just mentioned, and, as he does so the heavily weighted edge comes together, and no fish can escape. The outcast Bágdí in central Bengal swings the net round his head before casting it, but no respectable fisherman would dishonour his calling by so doing.

2. The "Uthár" and "Gúltí" are magnified cast nets, differing only in size and in the dimensions of the meshes. They are shot from a boat placed broadside to a stream, with the net folded on the edge. One man holds the centre rope, while two others gradually unfold, and drop it overboard. As the boat drifts the net falls in a circle, and is then slowly drawn up. One of these nets is often forty feet in diameter, and a long boat like the Jalká is required to shoot it from.

3. The "Sángla" is a small trawl net, used for catching "Hilsá." The lower edge of the bag is weighted, and after being shot the boat drifts with the stream. When a fish passing over the lower lip of the net, to which a rope held by the fisherman is attached, is felt to strike the back of the net, it is suddenly raised and the fish secured.

4. The "Baoti" is a fixed bag net, worked on the same principle.

5. "Chándí" is a large drift net, supported by gourds or bamboo floats, and in the water it hangs as a curtain like the herring net, the fish being caught by the gills.

6. Beṛ is a large sean, or sweep net, often thirty feet in depth, and seven hundred and fifty in length. Several nets are usually joined together to form this "train fleet," or "drift of nets." The upper edge, or back, is buoyed by bamboos, while the lower, or "foot," is weighted with iron. This is the favourite net with the Málos on the Meghna; but owing to its great length it has to be shot from two boats fastened together, and when drawn the two "wings," or ends, are slowly brought ashore.

7. "Besál," or "Khára," is a fixed net, used either from the side of a boat, balanced by an outrigger, or fixed to posts on the banks of rivers. The net is attached to two bamboos, which

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[1] Il Giacchio of Italian fishermen.

meet at an acute angle in the boat, but branching off until separate about fifteen to twenty feet. One man stands at the angle and lowers the net into the water, while another sits at the stern working a paddle with his leg until a certain distance has been passed over, when the net, which is somewhat bagged, is leisurely raised. This net is fancied by Tíyars and Málos, who at the first dawn of day may be seen fishing with it off bathing ghaṭs, and around steamers and vessels anchored in mid stream. Small fry are usually caught with it, but when fixed on the margin of a river, where there is a backwater or an eddy, large and weighty fish are often netted.

8. "Kona" is a large bag net used at the outlets of rivers and streams. The sides are fixed, and the mouth faces the current. The lower lip rests on the bottom, while the upper remains open, and at intervals the former is raised and the fish taken out.

Bengali fishermen are familiar with the habits of fish, and much might be learned from them on a branch of natural history strangely neglected in India. Night is the favourite time for fishing, quiet being necessary for success, and a full moon, or sunset and sunrise, are favourable times for shooting nets. The first of a spring tide is also a period when fish move.

It is a curious coincidence that the English fisherman, when looking for a place to shoot his large drift, or herring net, raps with a piece of wood the planks of his boat, close to the water line. The Málo is equally aware of the fact that brisk undulation of water frightens fish, causing them to move, and as the net is being drawn, a man beats the side of the boat with an oar, by which means the draught is increased.

During the month of mourning for a parent, no fisherman can ply his trade, or have any dealings in fish, unless he gets a special dispensation from the Purohit.

All fishermen object to sell the skate (Ságus), and will not retail in any way but whole the "Pangas" (*Pimelodus pangasius*), "Garua" (*Silurus garua*), and "Gagar" (*Pimelodus gagora*). Neither will they catch, or sell crabs, nor touch the "Putká," or bladder fish.[1] Many of the fisher castes of India have the Muhammadan aversion to fish without scales, and few will eat, or even handle the "Singi" (*Silurus singeo*). Eels, however, they sometimes cook, but owing to the rich and heating properties of the flesh, it is not a favourite article of food. Muhammadans of the Haníf́í school never eat amphibious animals, as the crab, consequently the only Bengali Muhammadans who use them as food are the indulgent residents of Chittagong.

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[1] The *Tetrodon patoca*. It emits a sound when lifted out of the water, and fills itself with air. Like the *T. Fahaca* of the Nile, it serves as a plaything for fisher children.

It is unfortunate we cannot estimate the numbers and distribution of the different fisher tribes from the census returns, as the Tíyars are the only ones specified, the others being included under the comprehensive, but indefinite, terms Jaliyá, Mallah and Mánjhi, which are trade not caste names. The total number of persons belonging to the boating and fishing tribes of Bengal proper is returned at 1,301,174, a very low estimate, if we consider the important place fish holds in the native dietary. The correct composition, however, of the population of Bengal can only be ascertained when a better knowledge of the people and of their different classes and subdivisions has been acquired.

JAUHARÍ.

Dealers in precious stones may be either Muhammadans or Hindus, but the more eager purchasers are, as a rule, persons of the former creed. Many shopkeepers sell gems, but the Jauharí can alone distinguish the real from the spurious.

"'Ilm al-jawáhir" is considered a distinct branch of oriental science, dealing with the qualities of gems, the art of distinguishing good from bad stones, and the knowledge of the virtues inherent in each.

According to oriental authorities, the most precious gems are nine in number,[1] each representing a planet. Black is ascribed to Saturn, green to Jupiter, red to Mars, yellow to the sun, and white to the moon. The colour of gems either depend on the matrix in which they are found embedded, or on the direct influence of its particular planet. Transparent stones are supposed to be formed from drops of rain; opaque ones from water and earth, acted on by the sun and the internal heat of the mine (Harárat-i-ma'dan).

The "Nava-ratna," or nine gems, are the following :—

1. Maṇika, Yáqút, Lál.

The ruby is regarded as the king of stones, and though found in Ceylon and Badakhshán, is said to be only genuine in Burmah. A large one exceeding six Ratís in weight is of priceless value; but should the slightest opacity, or flaw, be present, it is considered unlucky to wear it. A ruby, moreover, is believed to be a preservative against certain diseases, and a safeguard against lightning.

The ruby mines of Badakhshán, which supplied the "Rubis balais" of the French, have been closed for many years.

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[1] The Vaijayantí, or necklace of Vishnu, is only set with five, namely, pearl, ruby, emerald, sapphire, and diamond. "Vishnu Purána," p. 158.

2. Muktá, Motí.

Two varieties of pearls are distinguished, the Ceylon and Basra. According to oriental poets they are drops of vernal rain congealed in oyster shells, and by the same fanciful conceit the origin of amber is ascribed to the tears of "sorrowing sea birds." Pearls found in the fresh water rivers of Bengal by the Bediyás being of little value, are chiefly used in medicine. Tavernier mentions that at the court of Sháh Jahán no person of quality ever appeared in public without wearing earrings having a pearl set between two coloured stones.

3. Híra, Vajra, Almás.

Four varieties of diamonds are known in India, the white, red (Lál, or Gulábí), yellow, and green, which, in accordance with the fanciful nomenclature in fashion are distinguished as Bráhman, Kshatriyá, Vaiṣya, and Ṣúdra. The price of diamonds is estimated by their weight and cutting; The English brilliant is most valued, then the Dutch, Benares, "Takícha," and "Púrab," or Eastern cutting, the two latter being ground according to the rough and faulty fashion peculiar to India. The value of a stone in native ideas is enhanced by being large and heavy, and the workmen think more of leaving the stone big than of unveiling its hidden beauties. A variety, from its hardness called "Kaṛá," is spoken of as being so dark that no amount of polishing will brighten it. This is probably the "Carbonado," so much employed in boring rocks. Indian connoisseurs depreciate Cape diamonds as being dull and yellowish. A diamond with a pink or dark streak is considered by the natives of Hindustan as most unlucky.

4. Marakata, Harin-maṇi, Zummurud, Panná.

The emerald is a very favourite stone with Muhammadans, being used to ornament sword hilts, scabbards, and gold cups. Tavernier[1] asserts that it was unknown in India before the conquest of Peru in 1532; but he is undoubtedly wrong. In 1515, Andrea Corsali[2] says, emeralds are in greater estimation in India than any other stone; Garcia de Orta,[3] in 1563, mentions that Peruvian emeralds were then branded as spurious; and De Boot,[4] in 1609, writes, that during the previous fifty years oriental emeralds had fallen in value, owing to the importation of specimens from the New World; but that the Oriental were really better and more perfect stones. Baldaeus,[5] in the seventeenth century, describes three kinds of emeralds in India, the Scythian, Egyptian, and Peruvian, the first being most valued.

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[1] II, c. xvi.

[2] "Ramusio," i, 180.

[3] "Aromatum et simplicium, &c.," edition 1567, p. 199.

[4] "Gemmarum et lapidum historia," p. 101.

[5] "Churchill's Voyages," iii, 656.

Finally, Streeter[1] describes the Indian emerald as of quite a different quality from those found in South America. Where the oriental emerald came from was unknown to De Orta and De Boot; but of late years the emerald mines of Egypt, mentioned by Pliny, have been described by M. Cailliaud.

The popular belief in Hindustan is, that the finest emeralds formed part of a cargo of a vessel wrecked on the west coast of India, belonging to Alexander the Great.

Many virtues have been attributed to the emerald. Greeks and Arabs believed it to be an infallible preservative of chastity, and to facilitate parturition. A dark coloured stone without flaws is, by Al Suyúṭí, and oriental nations generally, considered a safeguard against snake bites, and, being a surety against epilepsy, is recommended to be worn by the children of noble families. An emerald reduced to powder, and given in a draught, cures leprosy.

5. Indra-níla, Nílam, Nílmaṇi, Çafír.

The sapphire comes either from Burmah or Ceylon. In Europe it has always been considered to prevent evil and impure desires; in the East the owner, it is believed, will never become poor, but if it exhibits the slightest flaw he will certainly die suddenly.

6. Go-meda, Go-medaka.

This is described as a red stone with a yellowish tinge, and is either an agate, or a topaz.

7. Lahsaniya, Chashmdár, 'Ain-ul-hirr.

Indian jewellers distinguish three sorts of cat's eye, one with a yellow, a second with a pale green, and a third with a dark shade or streak. Should the gem possess one or more lines of lustre it becomes priceless, being venerated as a sacred stone. On approaching buried treasure the owner will find the stone leave its setting, and as long as he retains it his wealth will never diminish. It is a preservative against many diseases, and all forms of witchcraft. De Orta and Baldaeus, preserve a superstition current in their day, to the effect that cloth rubbed with a cat's eye is rendered fireproof. The former believes in its truth, but the latter says, "I have found this contrary to truth by my own experience."

8. Prabála, Múngá, Marján.

In India red coral is included among gems, being made into beads for necklaces, and into charms for armlets. Tavernier states that coral was used in the seventeenth century "by the meaner sort of people, all over Asia, more especially by the hillmen of Asam and Bhútan for bracelets and necklaces." At the present day, it is given by Hakíms along with pearl powder to cure impotency, and by itself to correct bilious disorders.

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[1] "Precious Stones and Gems," p. 151.

9. Pítáṣman, Pukhráj, Topaz.

The topaz was more valued in Europe in former days than it is now; but in the East it has always been a favourite gem, being regarded by Muhammadans as the luckiest of stones. Muhammad is said to have worn one in a ring, which passed to his successors and ensured prosperity. The Khalífa Othman let it fall into a well, and this loss is believed to account for the tumults during his rule, and for his violent death. Confiding in the good fortune conferred by the stone, Aurangzíb always wore one on state occasions, and Tavernier alludes to a topaz in his treasury which cost 18,000 pounds sterling.

These are the nine gems of the Hindus, but many other precious stones, being valued, are invested with preternatural virtues.

The Fírozah, or turquoise, although cheap and common, is more frequently worn by Muhammadans than any other gem. The finest "Basháqi," come from Nishapúr in Khurásán, and Karman. If received as a gift the turquoise is believed to avert the evil eye, to be an antidote against poisons, to grow dim when the well-being of the giver is in danger, and to cure the stings of scorpions, as well as the bites of noxious animals. Another peculiarity attributed to it is that of becoming hazy when the sky is lowering or overcast.

Vaidúrya, Lájaward, or lapis lazuli, is often substituted as one of the nine gems in place of the cat's eye. Mines of this stone still exist in Badakhshán, but, being lightly valued, is rarely seen in Bengal.

Jade, known in Persia as Sang-i-yashm, but more generally throughout the East by its Turki name, "Kash," is not so much admired in Hindustan as in China and the Himálayas.

In India the grey, white, dark green, and red varieties are occasionally seen. The dark green was formerly most admired, and several drinking cups, belonging to Jahángír, are made of it. The different sorts are employed for ornamenting scabbards and the frames of mirrors. Trays, plaques, dagger and "Chaunrí" handles, are often made of this mineral. When bows and arrows were in fashion, the ring worn to protect the thumb was generally formed of jade. Many superstitious virtues are attributed to jade in India, and no Zanánah in Eastern Bengal is without a piece. Cups made of it are said to fly in pieces when poison is poured into them; a fragment is believed to protect the wearer against lightning; and when licked it allays palpitations of the heart. Jade is brought from the mines on the banks of the Karakash river in Khoten and

Yarkand, which were visited by Goez in 1604, and by Shaw in 1868. The fragments found in the river bring three times the price of the quarried stone, which is injured by the fire used to splinter it. From Yarkand it is chiefly exported to China, and never reaches India in the raw state.[1]

Many of the poorer Muhammadans in Bengal wear either a carnelian ('Aqíq), or an agate[2] (Sulaimání) ring, but a few fancy the moss agate, or Mocha stone ('Aqíq ul-bahr).

The carnelian is said to possess three properties: it calms a person excited by fear or passion; it stops hæmorrhage, especially in females; and it cures bleeding from the gums, or scurvy. Al Tífáshí distinguishes five kinds, red, flesh-coloured (Raṭbi), blue, black, and white.

Amber, much admired in parts of India, is not valued in Dacca, but its electrical properties early attracted attention, and both its Sanskrit name, "Tṛiṇa-gráhin," and its Persian, "Kahrubá," signify "straw drawing."

Amber is found on the eastern frontier along with lignite. Mines exist at Meinkhoon, north-east of Manípúr, and the fossil finds a ready sale among the Singphos and Chinese.[3]

Many oriental works on gems have been written, which are still popular in the East, and at least two have been translated into European languages. The work of Ahmad ibn Yúsuf ibn Muhammad Al-Tífáshí (d. 1253), called "Azhár al-Afkár," was partially done into Latin by Sebald Rau in 1784, and into Italian by Antonio Raineri in 1818. A treatise by the famous Al-Suyúṭi (d. 1505) was translated by the Maronite, Abraham Ecchellensis, in 1647. An abstract of Al Kazwínís' (d. 1275) celebrated "'Ajáib al-Makhluqát," or Wonders of Creation, has also been published.[4]

Bengal jewellers, however, either follow the "Jawáhir-sina," a work difficult to procure, or the "Jawáhir-námah" of Muhammad bin Mançúr, who lived in the thirteenth century. The latter, however, is a common title for books of gems, and one dedicated to Baber,[5] and another published at Delhi, or Haidarábad, anonymously,[6] are in use in India.

Gems are usually cut in India by Muhammadan Hakkáks; but always set by Hindu Karmakárs.[7]

[1] Regarding jade, more information is to be found in "Astley's Voyages," iv, 645; "Moorcroft's Travels," i, 375; Jule's "Cathay," i, 130; ii, 564; and Shaw's "Visit to High Tartary," p. 474.

[2] A'isha always wore an agate necklace.

[3] "Journals of Travels," by William Griffith, i, 77.

[4] "J. A. S. of Bengal," xiii, 632.

[5] "J. A. S. of Bengal," i, 353.

[6] "J. A. S. of Bengal," xxiii, 262.

[7] In the "Institutes of Menu" (ix, 329), the Vaiṣya is directed to know the prices of gems, pearls, and metals.

JOGÍ.

This singular race, found all over Eastern Bengal, is more numerous in Tipperah and Noakhally than Dacca, being everywhere reviled by the Hindus, without any satisfactory reason. The only grounds given by natives for abusing and ill-treating Jogís are that the starch of boiled rice (Már) is used by them in weaving, while the Tantí use parched rice starch (Káí), and that they bury their dead.

In Bengal three different varieties of Jogí are met with, namely—

Jogí, Bengali weavers,
Ját Jogí, Hindustání snake charmers,
Sannyásí Jogí, religious mendicants.

Jogí, or Yogí, literally means one who practices the Jog, *i.e.*, religious abstraction, or in a lower sense a pretender to superhuman faculties, while the designation is popularly given to any naked Hindu devotee.

In the census returns, the Jogí and Paṭwá are classified as one and the same caste, but in Dacca the latter is always the name of a Muhammadan trade. The weaver Jogí caste in Bengal is computed to include 426,543 individuals, 306,847, or 71 per cent. of the whole number, being distributed throughout the nine eastern districts. Like many outcast races, the Jogí has been driven into the outlying tracts of the province, and at the present day are massed in Silhet (82,038), Tipperah (66,812), Mymensingh (39,644), Noakhally (33,038), and Chittagong (32,314). In Dacca they only muster 16,410 persons.

Until the last few years the Bengali Jogís were all weavers, but now the cloth (Dhotí and Gamcha) manufactured by them is gradually being displaced by English piece goods, and the Jogí finds it difficult to earn a livelihood by weaving. A few who took to agriculture being outcasted, formed a new subdivision, called Hálwah Jogís. In Tipperah the burning of lime has been adopted as an occupation by some, but they, too, have been excommunicated. Others, again, take service under Government, or work as goldsmiths. Recently a shudder ran through the Hindu community when a Jogí was elevated to the bench, but many have already outlived this prejudice, and, except among the upper strata of society, no objections are now raised. The Jogí has peculiar difficulties in having his children educated, as no other boy will live with his son, who is consequently obliged to hire lodgings for himself, and engage servants of his own. The race, however, is ambitious, and recognises the value of education, but being poor, the higher branches of learning are beyond their reach.

The Jogí uses a much more cumbrous loom than either the Tántí or Juláha, but employs the same comb, or "Shánah," while his shuttle, "Nail,"[1] is peculiar to himself. The women are as expert weavers as the men, the preparation of the warp being exclusively done by them.

Jogís are a contented people, laughing at the prejudices of their neighbours. When they enter the house of any of the clean castes, a very rare occurrence, all cooked food, and any drinking water in the room, are regarded as polluted, and thrown away, but, strange to say, the Ṣúdra barber and washerman work for them. The Jogí, too, is intolerant, eating food cooked by a Ṣrotriyá Bráhman, but not that prepared by any Patit, or caste, Bráhman, or by a Ṣúdra, however pure. The Sannyásí Jogí eats with the weaving Jogí, but a Bairágí will only touch food given by the Adhikárí. Furthermore, the Ekádaṣí Jogí will eat with the Sannyásí if he is a Bráhman observing the Ṣráddha on the eleventh day.

In the burial of their dead all Jogís observe the same ceremonies. The grave (Samádhi, or Ahsan), dug in any vacant spot, is circular, about eight feet deep, and at the bottom a niche is cut for the reception of the corpse. The body, after being washed with water from seven earthen jars, is wrapped in new cloth, the lips being touched with fire to distinguish the funeral from that of a Muhammadan. A necklace made of the Tulasí plant is placed around the neck, and in the right hand a rosary (Jápa). The right forearm, with the thumb inverted, is placed across the chest, while the left, with the thumb in a similar position, rests on the lap, the legs being crossed as in statues of Buddha. Over the left shoulder is hung a cloth bag with four strings, in which four cowries are put. The body being lowered into the grave, and placed in the niche with the face towards the north-east, the grave is filled in, and the relatives deposit on the top an earthen platter with balls of rice (Piṇḍá), plantains, sugar, Ghí, and betel-nuts, as well as a "Huqqa" with its "Chilam" (bowl), a small quantity of tobacco, and a charcoal ball. Finally, from three to seven cowries are scattered on the ground as compensation to "Viṣa-matí" for the piece of earth occupied by the corpse. Women are interred in the exact same way as men.

The bag with its four cowries, and the position of the body are noteworthy. With the cowries the spirit pays the Charon who ferries it across the Vaitaraṇi river, the Hindu Styx; while the body is made to face the north-east because in that corner of the world lies Kailása, the Paradise of Ṣiv.

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[1] Sanskrit Nála, a tube, a shuttle.

The one title common to all the Jogí tribe is Náth, or lord.

The majority worship Mahádeo, or Ṣiv, but a few Vaishnavas are found among them.

Although all Jogís observe the funeral ceremonies just mentioned, they have separated into two great divisions, the Másya, the more numerous in Dacca, who perform the Ṣráddha thirty days (Mása) after death; and the Ekadaṣí, who celebrate it after eleven (Ekádaṣan) days. The former abound in the southern parts of Bikrampúr, Tipperah, and Noakhally, the latter in the north of Bikrampúr, and throughout the Dacca district generally. No intermarriages take place between them, and each refuses to taste food cooked by the other, although they drink from each other's water vessels.

1. MÁSYA JOGÍS.

They are the more interesting of the two, having adhered more strictly to the customs of their ancestors than the Ekádaṣí. The following account of their origin is given: In the Vṛihad Yoginí Tantra, their chief religious work, it is written that to Mahádeo were born eight passionless beings (Siddhas), who practised asceticisms, and passed their lives in religious abstraction. Their arrogance and pride, however, offended Mahádeo, who assuming his illusive power, created eight female energies, or Yoginís, and sent them to tempt the Siddhas. It was soon apparent that their virtue was not so impregnable as they boasted, and the issue of their amours were the ancestors of the modern Másya Jogís.

Another account is that a Sannyásí Avadhúta, or scholar, of Benares, who was an incarnation of Ṣiv, had two sons, the elder by a Bráhman woman, becoming the progenitor of the Ekádaṣí Jogís, the younger by a Vaiṣya woman of the Másya; but it is probable that this legend has been invented to account for the fact that the two divisions perform the obsequial rites at different dates.

The Másya Jogís have no Bráhmans who minister to them, but a spiritual leader, Adhikárí, elected by the Purohits, is invested with a cord, and styled Bráhman. In Tipperah and Noakhally the cord is still worn, but in Dacca of late years it has been discarded. The Adhikárí of the Másya Jogís in Dacca is Mathurá Ramaṇa, of Bídgáon, in Bikrampúr, a very illiterate man, who can with difficulty read and write Bengali. The post has been hereditary in his family for eight generations, and nowadays it is only in default of heirs that an election is held. It is a curious circumstance that the Adhikárí bestows the Manrta on the Bráhmans of the Ekádaṣí, and occasionally on

Sannyasi Jogís, although neither acknowledge any subjection to him. The Adhikárí has no religious duties to perform, as each household employs a Purohit to minister at its religious ceremonies. The Purohit is always a Jogí, inducted by the Adhikárí, and subordinate to him. He is often a relative, or marries a daughter of his master. The Adhikárí, again, has his Purohit, without whose ministration neither he nor any member of his family can marry or be buried.

The great festival of the Másya Jogís is the Ṣivarátrí, held on the fourteenth of the waning moon in Mágh (January-February); but they observe many of the other Hindu festivals, such as the Janmáshṭamí, and offer sacrifices beneath the " Bat " tree to the village goddess, Siddheṣvarí.

In all religious services they use a twig of the Udumbara, or Jagyá dúmúr (*Ficus glomerata*), and regard with special reverence the Tulasí, Bat, Pípal, and "Tamála" (*Diospyrus cordifolia*).

They have Stháns, or residencies, at Brindában, Mathurá, and Gokula, but their chief places of pilgrimage are Benares, Gayá, and Ṣítakhund in Chittagong

2. EKÁDAṢÍ JOGÍS.

They possess a Sanskrit work called Vṛiddha Ṣátátapíya, in which the Muní Ṣátátapa relates how the divine Ṛishí Nárada was informed by Bráhma that near Káṣí resided many Bráhman and Vaiṣya widows, living by the manufacture of thread, who had given birth to sons and daughters the offspring of Avadhútas, or pupils of Náthas, or ascetics. The Rishí was further directed to proceed to Káṣí, and, in consultation with the Avadhútas, to decide what the caste of these children should be. After much deliberation it was determined that the offspring of the Avadhútas and Bráhman widows should belong to the Ṣiva gotra; while the issue of the Vaiṣya widows should form a class called Náth, the former like the Bráhmans being impure for eleven days, the latter like the Vaiṣya for thirty days. Both classes were required to read six Vedas, to worship their Mátris, or female ancestors, at weddings to perform, each household for itself, the Nandí Ṣráddha in the name of their forefathers, and to wear the sacred cord.

It was farther enacted that the dead should be buried, the lips of the corpse being touched with fire by the son or grandson. It is from these Bráhman widows that the modern Ekádaṣí Jogís claim to be descended, and being of that lineage, mourn for only eleven days, although they have never assumed the Bráhmanical cord.

The Ekádaṣí have Bráhmans of their own, called "Varṇa-Ṣarman," and addressed as Mahátama, who trace their origin from the issue of a Ṣrotriyá Bráhman and a Jogí woman. In Bikrampúr alone it is estimated there are at least a hundred of these Jogí Bráhmans.

The majority of this division of Jogís are worshippers of Kṛishná, but a few who follow the Ṣákta ritual are to be met with. The Gosáins of Nityánanda admit Jogís into their communion, but those of Aḍvayánanda will not.

All Jogís in Eastern Bengal regard the family of Dalál Bazár, in the Noakhally district, as the head of their race, and very proud they are of the distinction which was conferred on that house. In the middle of last century Brijo Ballabh Ráí, a Jogí, was Dalál, or broker, his brother Raḍhá Ballabh Ráí being Jachandár, or appraiser, of the English factory of Char Páta, on the Meghna. The son of the former developed the trade in Báftah cloth to so great an extent that the Company in 1765 bestowed on him the title and rank of a rájah, presenting him at the same time with a Lákhiráj, or rent free, estate. His grandson still enjoys the property, being respected not only by the Jogís throughout Eastern Bengal, but by all who know him and his family.

The mourning dress of the Jogís is a cotton garment called "Jála Kaccha," literally netted end, manufactured by them, and identical with that worn by other Hindus between the death of a relative and the Ṣráddha. In a corner of this raiment the Jogí ties a piece of iron, suspending it over his shoulder. On the eleventh day, when the funeral obsequies are about to be performed, the barber, cutting off the iron, gives it to the wearer, who throws it into water, then bathes, offers the Piṇḍa to the manes of the deceased, and returns home.

The Jogí Bráhmans are, with few exceptions, illiterate, but a few gain a livelihood as Páṭhaks, or readers of the epic poems. Jogís are the Mahants of the Kapila Muní shrine in the Sunderbuns, and officiate at the Váruṇi festival in Phálgun.[1]

All Jogís believe that good spirits are at death absorbed into the Deity, while the bad reappear on earth in the form of some unclean animal; but women, however exemplary they may have been in this world, are not cheered by any assurance of a future state, it being believed that death is for them annihilation.

Who, then, are the Jogís? Buchanan thought it probable that they were either the priesthood of the country during the reign of the dynasty to which Gopí-Chandra[2] belonged, or

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[1] "J. A. S. of Bengal," vol. xxxix, 238.
[2] *Ibid.*, vol. iii, 534.

Ṣúdras dedicated to a religious life, but degraded by the great Ṣaiva reformer Ṣankara Áchárya,[1] and that they came with the Pál Rájas from western India. In Rangpúr he found the Jogís living by singing an interminable cyclic song in honour of Gopí-Chandra. This is all the information collected by that shrewd and trustworthy observer, and since the beginning of the century no fresh facts have been added.

After repeated interviews with the Adhikárí and Jogí Bráhmans their history is still uncertain. A tradition, however, survives in Bikrampúr, that their ancestors were Bráhmans, who, forgetting the Gáyatrí, or sacred verses, were degraded.

JÁT-JOGI.

This class of Hindustani vagrants, also called Madárí, Tubriwálas, or Sáṉyá, who play on pipes[2] and exhibit tame snakes, frequently visit Dacca after attending the two annual festivals of Gorakhnáth, near Gorakhpúr. They wander over the country, subsisting as snake charmers, and by capturing wild ones, but scandalising the people by their intemperate and filthy habits. They wear shell bead necklaces, massive brass earrings, called "Gorakhnáth ka mundrá,"[3] and long untrimmed beards. Their homes are in the Mirat or Delhi districts, where they are known as Ját-Jogí. Being usually married, their wives occasionally assist at the snake-charming exhibitions. Tall, fine-looking men they often are, but their garments are always dirty and habits most dissolute. The police are constantly on the watch when the band is on the move, as thefts, and even murders, are attributed to them.

KÁCHARU.

This small caste claims to be an offshoot of the Káyasth, and tell the following absurd story to explain the separation, and consequent debasement: A rich and aspiring Káyasth determined on celebrating the worship of Kálí in his own house, contrary to the wishes of his brethren, and deaf to all arguments he performed the ceremony, but was punished by being excommunicated. This is a most improbable story, as the Kácharu caste is dispersed throughout Eastern Bengal, being very numerous at Madárípúr in Farrídpúr, and it has a Purohit of its own. The Ṣúdra barber and washerman work for them, although their water vessels are unclean. It is far more probable that, like the Chhoṭá-bhágiya Tántís, they were expelled for adopting a new trade.

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[1] J. A. S., vol. iii, 408.

[2] Tomṛi. S. Tumba, a dried gourd (*Lagenaria vulgaris*). An epithet of Ṣiva is Tumba-Víṉa, having a gourd for a lute. On the gourd mystic figures are usually engraved.

[3] There is a close connection between these Sáṉyas and the Kánpháta Jogís. Both wear similar ornaments, and Ṣiva is the patron deity. Wilson's "Essays on the Religion of the Hindus," i, 217.

In Dacca the Kácharu are gradually relinquishing their caste trade, the manufacture of glass bracelets (Kácha), in which Muhammadans also engage, and are acting as traders, grocers, and shopkeepers.

The caste has three gotras, Aliman, Kaṣyapa, and Paráṣará. Their patronymics are Dutt, Dáṣ, and Dé. The principal festival kept is in honour of Viṣva-Karma in Bhádra (August-September).

KAHÁR.

According to their census there were, in 1872, 7,821 Rawání Kahárs in the nine eastern districts of Bengal, of whom 1,436 were returned as residents of Dacca; while of the Behára, or Ḍolíya sept, there were 19,569 individuals in the former districts, and 1,226 in Dacca. Kahárs, however, principally inhabit Bihár and Hindustan, and in 1872 there were 378,706 belonging to the caste in the former province, while in 1865 there were 693,519 in the latter. The relation between the Kahár and the Behára[1] is still obscure, but it is probable that the latter term, as well as Ḍolíya, are merely names given to palanquin bearers, and not to any caste.

In accordance with Bráhmanical genealogy, the Káhar is descended from a Bráhman father and a Nisháda or Chanḍál mother, but it is now generally admitted that the Kahár and Dhímar are identical, the former being remnants of a primitive race who dwelt in the valley of the Ganges, and the latter outcast Kahárs.

The Kahár being the most docile and industrious of workmen, is in much request throughout Bengal, and of late years he has been in great demand as a coolie for the tea gardens of

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[1] Sanskrit, Bhára, a load.

Assam, Kachar, and Chittagong. A few also come yearly from Chaprah, being employed in the city of Dacca as coolies, porters, and domestic servants; but they always return home as soon as a little money has been saved. These Hindustání, or Rawání, Kahárs, observe a peculiar worship in honour of Gaṇeṣa Jí on the seventh day of the waxing moon of Kártik (October-November), when, accompanied by Bráhmans, they proceed to a wood, and make offerings of vegetables, fruits, and sweetmeats, under an "Ámlá" tree (*Phyllanthus emblica*); but never sacrifice any animal. A feast is then given to the Bráhmans, after which the Kahárs dine, and drink spirits to excess. The entertainment of Bráhmans on this day is accounted as meritorious as the gift of five cows on any other occasion.

Kahárs domiciled in Bengal, and known as Ḍolíya, are proscribed by the Hindustání brethren, because, having ceased to observe the peculiar customs of the caste, they have adopted those of the despised Bengali Ṣúdras. The Ḍolíya are met with along the old post road between Dacca and Calcutta, and at Manshúrábád, on the Padma river, twenty-five houses are occupied by them, while in Farrídpúr still larger settlements occur. Palanquin travelling being no longer the custom in the country, the Ḍolíyas have become cultivators, domestic servants, and palanquin bearers in cities. The Rawání Kahár is an eager and indefatigable sportsman, but the Ḍolíya is content to catch fish in traps, and has given up hunting and snaring game. In one respect the Ḍolíya is unchanged. Spirit drinking is to him, as to the Rawání Kahár, the *summum bonum* of life, but he shudders at the thought of swine's flesh, which is still a favourite article of food with his Hindustání kinsmen. The Ḍolíyas, rejected by the Kahárs and by the Bengalí Ṣúdras, have a Bráhman of their own, and all belong to a gotra called Aliman. The majority are Ṣaiva worshippers, but a few are Vaishnavas.

In Bengal the Hindi name, "Mahará," is applied to any palanquin bearers not Kahárs, and in Dacca bearers either belong to the Mitra Sení subdivision of the Bhúinmálí caste, or to the Kándho branch of the Chaṇḍál. A few Muhammadan palanquin bearers, called Ḍolí-wálas, or Sawárí-wálas, may occasionally be picked up, but their numbers are yearly diminishing.

Last century the title Kahár was, at Patna, the distinctive appellation of a Hindu slave, as Mauläzádah was of a Muhammadan; and the tradition in 1774 was, that the Kahár slavery took its rise when the Muhammadans first invaded Northern India.[1]

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[1] "Slavery in India," by James Peggs, p. 6.

KAIBARTTA, KAIVARTA.

This is by far the most numerous and interesting of the fisher tribes of Eastern Bengal. Their name is radically the same as Kewaṭ, the word Kaibartta being derived from the Sanskrit *Ka*, water, and *Varta*, livelihood, Kewaṭ, from *Ka* and *Vat*, to enclose. There are, however, great difficulties in distinguishing between the two, but Buchanan has offered the following explanation:—

In the west of India there was, and still is, a class of fishermen called Málo, by a woman of which impure tribe Paráṣara Muní begot a son, the famous Vyása. When Vyása established the Hindu religion as it now exists, he naturally favoured his mother's kinsmen, and gave those who adhered to his rules of purity the name of Kaibartta, and appointed Ṣúdra Bráhmans to minister unto them. On the other hand, those who remained fishermen, clinging to their ancestral customs, retained the name of Málo, and continued degraded.

In Bengal, again, there was a powerful tribe called Kewaṭ, whom Ballál Sen in after years raised to the grade of pure Ṣúdras, conferring on them the title Kaibartta as a return for their leaving off their family trade. The Bráhmans, however, refusing to officiate for them, the less scrupulous Vyásakta were appointed. Hence it followed, that wherever the laws of Ballál Sen were observed, the appellation Kewaṭ, given to those who pursued their old and rude habits, came to be regarded as an opprobrious and dishonouring title, and one that ought to be got rid of as soon as possible. In Maithila, Kámrup, and Eastern Bengal, Kewaṭ and Kaibartta are synonymous. This great tribe is therefore subdivided into Halwáha Kaibartta, or Kewaṭ, if in the particular district the latter term is not reckoned disgraceful, and Kewaṭ, or, where that designation is disapproved of, Jalwah Kaibartta, and, if this is not granted, Jáliya, or persons using nets (Jál). In Eastern Bengal they call themselves Dás, or Jalwah, Kaibartta, there being no Chásá, or Halwáha subdivision. In Dacca, moreover, as well as in Kámrup Dhívara, the Sanskrit for a fisherman, is used as a synonym, while, according to the Amara Kosha dictionary, Dás Kaibartta and Dhívara are convertible terms.

The Kaibarttas of Bengal trace their descent from Mátsyagandha, the fisher girl, whose amour with Paráṣara Muní is related in the Mahá Bhárata, and who became the mother of Vyása. Of his descendants, the Vyásakta Bráhmans, they know nothing. Their own Bráhmans are generally confounded with the Patit, and, according to local tradition, it was Ballál Sen who first bestowed on them a degraded priesthood. At the great assemblage of the castes, the Kaibarttas pleaded their right to be included among the Nava-Ṣákhá, as being the offspring of a Muni, but the monarch, deaf to all their arguments, alloted them one of the most degraded priests. At the present day these Bráhmans are so despised, that no clean Ṣúdra will touch anything cooked by them, and, in reality, they rank beneath the Ṣúdra. This curious circumstance is suggestive of some such irregular creation as that referred to by Buchanan.

The Kaibarttas were amongst the earliest inhabitants of Bengal, and acquired a commanding position many centuries ago. On the extinction of the Peacock dynasty of Tamluk, Kalu Bhuyá, a Kaibartta from Orissa, founded a line of fisher kings, who are still possessors of the Ráj.[1] He introduced a new religion, including a shapeless block of stone, called "Barga-bhíma," which was held in great veneration, and has since been identified as one of the innumerable forms of the dreaded Kálí.

The Dás Kaibartta in Dacca often cultivate the soil, although they have not as yet separated into a distinct caste, as the Chásá and Tútiya Kaibarttas have done in other parts of Bengal. According to Ward,[2] the Chásá Kaibartta is descended from a Ṣúdra male and a female Kshatriyá, but there is little doubt that they were originally fisher Kaibarttas, who took to agriculture. As with the Tíyars the position of the Kaibarttas is uncertain, for while the fisher class is invariably reckoned impure, the agricultural is not always so.

The Jalwah, or fisher Kaibarttas, are all members of one gotra, the Aliman, their common patronymic being Dás, but a few individuals, who practise medicine, have assumed the title of Baidyá. In some places the Ṣúdra Nápit and Dhobá work for them, but this is exceptional. Their Guru is a Gosáin, the Purohit a Patit Bráhman, and the whole caste is Vaishnava in creed.

Their great annual festival is the "Jal pálani," or net preserving, which begins on the first of Mágh (February). From two and a half to seven days is the usual duration of this close period, and on the last day, when the Ganga Pújah is celebrated, the net is arranged on the river's bank, and daubed with red lead. Offerings are then made to the river goddess, prayers recited by the priest, and a live kid thrown into the water, which becomes the perquisite of the Bhúinmálí, or Paṭní. A few worship Buṛa-Buṛí, and at the Kálí Pújah a kid is sacrificed, its flesh being eaten by the worshippers. The Ṣráddha is solemnized on the thirtieth day after death. In Bikrampúr the customary sum paid for a wife is fifty-one rupees; but the market rate is often as high as two hundred rupees. When the Kaibartta has amassed a little money, he gives up the occupation of a fisherman, and becomes a fishmonger (Nikari), using in his leisure hours a cast net, but no other. Kaibarttas generally cultivate a field of hemp, and if they hold no land make advances to the peasantry, who plant out a patch for them; they prepare the fibre and their wives spin it, and manufacture nets, ropes, and twine.

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[1] Hunter's "Orissa," vol. i, 310.
[2] Vol. i, 140.

The Kaibarttaní do not generally sell fish in the bazaars, or appear in public, but becoming widows they cannot remarry, and often join the wandering " Boistubis."

The only curers of fish in Easten Bengal are the Kaibarttas, the curing being carried on in November and December, when fish are most abundant. The fish-curers generally belong to Bajitpúr in Mymensingh, or to Báqirganj. Early in Novembar a piece of land is leased by the waterside, and the neighbouring fishermen are engaged to bring the proper kind, the small "Potí," or "Poṇtí," fish. The fish is first of all placed between mats, and trodden under foot, and then slowly dried in the sun, no salt being used. This nasty, and often putrid, mess is exported to those districts where fish are not procurable during the cold season. In Mymensingh larger fish are gutted, dried in the sun, and, without the addition of any brine, buried in pits. At the beginning of the rains, when fresh fish are not procurable, this "Sukhtí," as it is called, is dug up, put on board boats, and transported to Silhet and Kachhár, where it is esteemed a great delicacy, and is retailed by the resident Kaibarttas in the distant villages of the interior.

The preparation of isinglass (Machhí Ka Phúkná) is unknown to the fisher castes of Dacca.

KÁMÁR, KARMAKÁRÁ.

The Kámár combines the trades of the Hindustání Sonár and Lohár, having no scruples about working with any kind of metal.

As among other Dacca castes, there exists a tradition that they were brought from Upper India by the Muhammadan government. In the 'Aín-i-Akbarí we are informed that there was an iron mine in Sarkar Buzúha, which included Dacca, and in later times Jagírs, called "Áhangar," were granted to the skilled workmen employed in smelting iron from the red laterite soil of the Dacca district. It is very probable, therefore, that the tradition referred to is founded on fact. At the present day, however, the Kámárs are unacquainted with the art of smelting iron, and a local supply being unobtainable, they procure pig iron from Calcutta.

The Kámár, as above stated, works with all metals, including gold and silver, and being himself a clean Ṣúdra, thoroughly despises the professional goldsmith, or Sonár-banik, who is unclean.

In Dacca the caste is said to occupy two hundred houses, and according to the census returns they number 12,072 persons in the district.

The Kaṉsárí, or brasier caste, is no longer met with in the city, the manufacture of the brass utensils, solely used in Hindu households, devolving on the Kámárs, their only competitors being the Ghulám Káyasths, many of whom engage in this trade.

The majority of the Kámárs are Vaishnavas, but a few follow the Ṣákta ritual, the Purohit being the same as the Bráhman of the other Nava-ṣákha. They have no Parámánik, but a Pancháít exists, at which the most influential person present presides.

They have only one gotra, the Aliman, and no titles. The caste has always been an illiterate one, its members at the present day only learning sufficient Bengali to enable them to keep accounts.

The Kámár makes an alloy with three parts of copper and four of zinc, called "Bhart," and with it manufactures cups, lotahs, and other vessels.

The "Panní-wálah," or tin-foil maker, is always a Kámár; the tin is obtained in bars from Calcutta, and being run into moulds, is, while still soft, beaten out until thin enough to be cut into strips, which are then stained with lac and turmeric so as to counterfeit the colour of gold. The foil so produced is then sold to the Muhammadan Chúṛí-wálah to ornament his glass bracelets, and to the Málákár to embellish chaplets, tiaras, images of gods and goddesses, and the platforms paraded on gala days.

KANAUJIYÁ BRÁHMANS.

There are only ten or twelve houses in Dacca occupied by this Hindustání tribe, but several families having settled in Bengal, are styled Khoṇṭá, and been excommunicated. Finding a difficulty in obtaining wives, these outcasts have intermarried with the inferior Bengal tribes, and will eventually become merged in the ranks of the Ṣrotriyá.

Of the sixteen denominations of the Kanaujiyá subdivision of Bráhmans the most common in Dacca are Dúbe, Tiwárí, and Súkul. These Bráhmans are employed as Dafa'dárs, constables, and Barkandázs; but in former days they held important posts under the Nawábs, and their descendants still proudly wear the "Sarmáí," or cold weather embroidered cap, of the Muhammadan aristocracy. A Dúbe, named Natú Singh, was Názir of the Provincial Court of Appeal last century, and to him Dacca owes the erection of the two hideous towers, called "Názir-Ka-maths," on the spot where the bodies of his father and mother were burned.

At the present day the most famous Kanaujiyá of Dacca is a Tiwárí from Baiswáṛá, who has raised himself into notoriety by his skill in telling fortunes and casting horoscopes. He is styled "the Bráhman," the Paṇḍit, or Jyotishí, by the Hindus; and Rammál, or Nujúm, by the Muhammadans. His services are as indispensable at the birth and naming of a Muhammadan as of a Hindu child.

KÁNDHO.

This is a subdivision of Chaṇḍáls, formerly palanquin bearers, deriving their names from the Sanskrit Skandha, the shoulder, who still have the Chaṇḍál Bráhmans and servants working for them. At the present day a few carry palkís, when required, but the majority are boatmen, and cultivators. All are included in a gotra, the Kaṣyapa. Their principal festivals are the feast of first-fruits, or Lakshmí Pújáh, celebrated at the full moon of Kártik (October-November); the Buṛa-Buṛí sacrifice on the Paus Sankrántí; and of late years the Trí Náth Melá.

Their widows still remarry, and the old Chaṇḍál fondness for pork and spirits survives.

The Kándho will carry a Sáha, a Mussulmán, or a Farangí in a palanquin; but refuse to bear a Jalwah, or fisherman, a Ṛishí, a Chaṇḍál, a Dhobá, or a Bhúinmálí. They, moreover, imitate the Kahárs in shouting "Rám! Rám! Harí! Harí!" in the act of lifting the pole on to the shoulder.

KÁNDÚ.

The Kándús, or sugar boilers of Hindustán, happily called "frymen" by early English travellers, occupy about twenty-five houses in the city.

According to the Bráhmans, the Kándú is descended from a Baidyá, or Kahar, father and a Ṣúdra mother, but in Gorakhpúr he is regarded as a Vaiṣya, and the Rájputs drink from their waterpots.[1]

The ordinary subdivisions found in Bengal are—

Kanaujiyá,	Madhya-desh,
Magbaiyá,	Khuránt.

The majority of the Dacca Kándús belong to the two last, and are usually called "Bhaṛ-bhunjás," from their parching and grinding grain, and preparing "Sattú," or flour. Another equally common designation is Pánch Píriya Kándús, from the religious sect to which they all belong. The Dacca Kándús originally came from Damdáhá, in Purneah; but having resided for several generations in Bengal are known as Khoṇtá, or degraded, and Deswálí, or alien, Kándús, by their Hindustání brethren, who decline all communication with them.

In Upper India Kándús are often cultivators, but they also parch grain, and use pack-bullocks, as the Banjárás do, for transporting merchandise and cereals. In Dacca the Kándús are confectioners, as well as watchmen, domestic servants, and coolies. Their lowly origin does not prevent their providing the only food that strict Hindus can eat with unwashed hands.[2]

In the month of Mágh, Kándús, instead of worshipping Sarasvatí, as most Hindus do, pay adoration to Sukha Ṣív Náth. At this festival a pot filled with "Ghi," flour, barley, and other articles of their trade, together with a large quantity of rosin (Dhúná), is set fire to, and the dense smoke is regarded as the symbol or manifestation of their patron deity.

The Dacca Kándús, although employing a Bráhman as Purohit, follow the singular creed called Pánch Píriyá. Many observe the fast of Ramazán; wear the "baddhi" or sash, and the "Kafní" or mendicant's garb; offer sweetmeats (Shírní) at Dargahs, and at the Shíah Husainí Ḍalán; and confide in amulets (Ta'wiz) given by the Khwánd-Kár.

In their marriage and funeral ceremonies they follow the Ṣúdra custom. Like the Pánch Píriyá Binds, and Kumhárs, their Guru is the Mahant of the Nának Sháhí Akhárá.

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[1] Buchanan, ii, 465.

[2] Vegetable products, such as Guṛ, or molasses, and any sweetmeat cooked by a Sáha, or Muhammadan, without the addition of any other substance than sugar, is called "Jálá," and may be eaten even by Bráhmans without dishonour; but if even water, or milk be added, it is "Pakka," or dressed, and becomes impure.

KÁNSÁRÍ, KÁNSYA-KÁRA.

This is an offshoot of the Sonár-banik, outcasted because its members manufactured articles of Kánsá, or bell-metal, but nowadays, they are workers in brass, and are properly Ṭhatheras, or brasiers. In Dacca very few are to be met with, but at Rájnagar, on the right bank of the Padma, they are numerous.

The Kánsári is a clean Súdra, having the same Bráhman, Nápit, and Dhobá as the Nava-sákha; but strange to say, they are all Saivas, no Vaishnavas being found in their ranks. Like other artizan classes they keep the festival of Visva-Karma, and refrain from all work.

They manufacture with brass sheeting procured in Calcutta, and hammered into the requisite shape, small caldrons (Bhokná), salvers, and elongated water pots. Cuttings and filings are fused, and worked up.

The uténsils are sold to dealers (Páekár), who retail them in the inland villages.

Chandáls often serve the Kánsári, and become very skilful workmen.

KANTHÁ[1] BRÁHMAN.

This despised Bráhman, sarcastically named Mahábráhman, or Mahápátra, performs for Hindustání families the same offices as the Agradána does for Bengali. They formerly occupied as many as forty houses in Dacca, and a large reservoir of water is still known as "Kantha Ka Taláo," but now only one man, whose ancestors came from Patna, resides there.

This, the most abhorred of Hindustání Bráhmans, notorious for avarice, bad temper, and drunkenness, is considered a degraded branch of the Sawálákhia tribe. They have good grounds for being irascible. They are compelled to live apart, and when seen in public, boys hoot and pelt them. Many absurd stories are told of their doings—one is, that every morning the Kantha drives a peg into the ground, and throws stones at it. If he hits it, he goes home in great glee, regarding his success as an omen of the early death of some rich person. On the other hand, if his aim is bad, he returns disconsolate.[2]

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[1] The meaning of this word is obscure, but it may be the Sanskrit Kantha, a rag, or patched garment, worn by ascetics.

[2] The story of Rousseau and Goethe trying to forecast the future by a similar experiment is well known.

As soon as the funeral service is finished he must fly, and he is lucky if his home is reached with only the execrations of the crowd ringing in his ears.

The Kanthá Bráhman attends at the funerals of all high caste Hindustánís in Dacca, preparing the Piṇḍa, or obsequial ball of rice, and providing the plantain, sesamum seed, and barley to be put in the hands of the corpse before cremation begins. He, too, is the only person who can repeat certain Mantras, or prayers, over the pyre.

At the Ṣráddha the Kanthá prepares ten Piṇḍas, and one for the "Ekádaṣí," as oblations to the manes of the departed. For doing this he receives from the poor presents of curdled milk, sugar, and parched rice (Chúṛá); from the rich, sweetmeats and pieces of cloth.

At the cremation service he gets no remuneration; but at the ensuing Ṣráddha it is customary for the poor to give him twenty anas, the rich any sum up to one hundred rupees, in return for his labour.

KAPÁLI.

This caste claims to be the offspring of a Karmakár and a Telin, or woman of the oil-making trade.[1] In Hindi Kapáli means sly, and, according to Forbes, is the name of a caste in Bengal, who sell vegetables. It is also one of the titles of Ṣiva. The common derivation given by Paṇḍits is the Sanskrit Kapála, meaning the head, or a dish. Whether any of these words be the correct origin of the name or not, it is certain that the caste is peculiar to Bengal, and that in Dacca, at least, it is quite distinct from the Kawáli.

Like many Bengal castes, the Kapáli have a vague tradition that their original home was in Upper India; but this tradition has never assumed a legendary form. The caste claims to be of higher rank than the Bhúinmálí, Chaṇḍál, or Sáha, and being descended from clean Ṣúdras the pure Dhobi and Nápit work for them. The Purohit, who is distinct from that of the Kawálí, is a Patit Bráhman. Their only gotra is Kaṣyapa; and the caste Pancháít is presided over by a headman, called Mu'tabar. The titles found among the Kapálís are Mánjhí, Mundle, Shiqdár, Mála, and Háldár; the families with the first three patronymics being regarded as higher than the others, while a larger sum is paid for their daughters.

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[1] According to others the offspring of a Brahman mother and fisherman father.

In Rangpúr, Buchanan found the Kapálí engaged in making umbrellas; but in Eastern Bengal at the present day they are weavers and cultivators. They chiefly cultivate jute (Koshtá), preparing the fibre themselves, and manufacturing from it coarse canvas (Ṭáṭ) for bags. Men and women weave, their loom being the ordinary native one, but clumsier than that used by the Tántí. Their shuttle is called Váya, and they dispense with the reed (Shánah). They are also careful to explain that the shuttle is shot with the hands, as among the Tántís, and not driven by pedals as with the outcast Jogies.

The Kapálí manufactures three kinds of canvas, the first, "Chálá" being used for the carriage of rape seed; the second, "Chot" for packing goods; and the third, "Ṭáṭ" being in universal demand for floor matting, for boat sails, rice bags, and bags for country produce generally. In Bikrampúr a finer kind of canvas, known as "Vára-Vastra," is woven for the carriage of betle-nuts. The trade of the Kapálí has of late years suffered greatly by the importation of gunny bags from Europe; but they always find a ready market for the sale of matting. Bamboo mats for floors are seldom used in Bengal, but canvas is laid down in every shop, and beneath bedding whenever the ground is slept on. On the Vijaya Daṣamí day of the Durga Púјah each Bengali shopkeeper, often including the Muhammadan, regards it as a duty to throw away the old matting of his shop, and replace it by new.

The Kapálís generally reside in villages, where they can cultivate jute, never in large towns, and would lose caste if they worked with hemp or cotton. Their occupation being different from that of the Tántí, the two castes live in amity with one another.

The Kapálí is usually poor, but in former days several of them rose to be Táluqdárs. In Dacca none possess land, but a few having relinquished their caste trade have become boatmen and Modís. The majority of the Kapálís are worshippers of Vishnu, and observe all the common Hindu festivals. They assert that they never taste spirits, but it is generally believed they do. Gánjha smoking, however, is common among them.

KARNI.

This low caste of weavers lay claim to relationship with the great Tántí family, but the claim is repudiated. Nevertheless, it is a curious circumstance that the Nápit, Dhobá, and other servants of the clean Ṣúdra tribes work for them, which would not be the case if they were of ḥumble origin, yet their Purohit is peculiar to themselves.

Various derivations of the name Karní are given. According to some it is merely a corruption of the Hindí Kurmí, while others suggest it is the Sanskrit "Kár," to do, hence by metonomy to do what is forbidden.

The caste is a small one, being only met with in the western Thánas of the Dacca district, along the left bank of the Padma river, but it is more numerous in Farrídpúr and Pubna. It has three gotras, Bharadvája, Alimau, and Kaṣyapa. Vaishnavism is the religion of the majority, Ṣaivism of the minority.

The Kạrní are exclusively engaged in weaving, agriculture and fishing being strictly forbidden. They manufacture the "Dhotí" or waist-cloth, the "Gamcha," the mourning garment worn by all Hindus, as well as chequered bed curtains (Chár-khána).

KARRÁL.

This name, of doubtful origin,[1] is applied to an outcast sub-division of the great Chaṇḍál tribe which has become degraded from carrying on the business of fishmongers. Their kinsmen neither intermarry nor hold any social intercourse with them, but the same Bráhman and servants work for both.

The Karrál is to the Hindu population what the Mahífarosh, or Panjárí, is to the Muhammadan, and men and women, though they never fish themselves, retail fish in the markets, and often make advances to fishermen.

The caste is more numerous in Farrídpúr than in Dacca, but all along the left, or Dacca bank of the Padma, small colonies are established, while inland individuals are employed as constables and messengers.

The Karráls are all Vaíshnavas in creed, and united in one gotra, the Kaṣyapa. They confess to a partiality for spirits, but allege that they abstain from flesh, including pork, unless when the animal has been sacrificed.

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[1] The name may be derived from the Sanskrit Karála, great, formidable.

KAWÁLÍ.

This caste of musicians, often designated Halwah Kawálís, were originally Kapálís, but having adopted a different occupation, were compelled to enroll themselves in a new caste. The same Bráhman, however, officiates for both, but intermarriages, or social intercourse, is strictly prohibited. Buchanan found the Kawálí very numerous west of Patna, living as petty dealers and carriers. The Kapálí, again, he regards as a Bengali tribe, and in Puraniyá he found them engaged in burning lime like the Chunarí.

In Dacca the Kawális preserve a tradition that they are the offspring of a Káyasth father and a Dhobín, or washerwoman, and the Ṣúdra servants work for them, as they also do for the Kapális.

The Kawálí of Dacca is a musician, playing on any instrument taught him by his Ustád, Sirdár, or teacher. When young he is apprenticed to a master, whose credit depends on the proficiency of his pupil. Youths are also taught to dance, and, strange to say, the Purohit does not disdain to join in a dance, or to take a part in a theatrical play. The Kawálí declines to play in the house of any caste who has not the Ṣúdra Nápit, and Dhobá, and refuses to attend at the homes of the Muhammadan Dái, or Hajjám. They have no objections, however, to play in concert with the Nar, Ṛishí, or Hajjám.

The Kawálís all belong to one gotra, the Aliman. They have no surnames, but several honorary titles, such as Ḍhálí, Mála, Háldár, and Mánjhí, and the most respectful term by which to address them is "Vidyádhara," a name given to the dancers in Indra's heaven.

The great annual festival of the Kawálís is the Ṣrí Panchamí, in honour of Sarasvatí; but its observance is not allowed to interfere with their professional engagements, and they as readily accept employment on that day as on any other. The Kawális are all Vaishnavas, and are hired by Hindu villagers to sing the religious hymns called Harí San-kírtan.

The dancing girls to whom they usually play are either Muhammadans (Bái), or Chaṇḍálnís; but widows belonging to any caste, even to the Bráhman, are often found with them.

The Kawálís observe the Ṣráddha and Shashṭhi ceremony on the same days as the Kapálí, and Ṣúdras generally.

KÁYASTHA, KÁYATH, KÁIT.

The origin of this important caste is unknown, and all attempts to explain how and when it rose have been fruitless. In one part of the country the members claim to be of higher rank than the Ṣúdras, and repudiate that title; but in Bengal they are classified immediately below the Baidyá caste, with whom they live on terms of great jealousy. If we accept Karaṇa,[1] which means "a man of mixed race," as synonymous with Káyath, the caste is descended from a Bráhman father and a mother of the class next beneath it in rank; but according to other authorities it is the issue of a Kshetriyá father and a Vaiṣya mother. The Káits, however, are better pleased to have their parentage doubtful than to be the reputed offspring of such an ignoble stock.

The word Káyath is generally derived from the Sanskrit Káyá, a body, because the progenitor of the clan is said to have sprung from the body of Brahma, yet it is probable that Káyath was simply a man's and not a tribal name.

The Káyaths of Bengal are believed to be descended from five persons who served the five Bráhmans brought from Kanauj by Adisúra in the ninth century. The names of the five servants were—

Daṣaratha Bosu,
Makaranda Ghose,
Viráṭa, or Súkdeo Gúha,
Kálí Dás Mittra,
Purushottama Datta.

A tradition survives, that after celebrating the "Putreshṭí Jagya," for which their masters had been summoned, the Káyaths returned to Kanauj, but were repudiated as outcasts by their brethren, upon which they came back to Bengal with two other members of their clan, named Nág and Náth, and settled at Pancha-Ṣára in Bikrampúr.

The Káyaths of Bengal are subdivided into four great tribes, who formerly had no connection with one another, although all were engaged in the same profession, but of late years the causes of separation having been removed, individuals belonging to allied tribes intermarry.

The four tribes are—

Uttar-Ráṛhí,
Dakhin-Ráṛhí,
Bangaja,
Varendra.

The distribution of the tribes is as follows:—

The Uttar-Ráṛhí are met with in the districts of Bírbhúm, Burdwan, Murshídábad, parts of Rangpúr, Dinajpúr, Hughli, and Jessore. The Dakhin-Ráṛhí are massed in Burdwan,

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[1] In Midnapore Káyasths still describe themselves as Karans.

Hughli, Midnapúr, 24 Pergunnahs, Jessore, Kishnaghur, and parts of Báqirganj, while in Dacca only two families reside. The Bangaja are established in Báqirganj, Jessore, 24 Pergunnahs, Dacca, Farrídpúr, western part of Mymensingh, eastern part of Pubna, and in several villages of the Bograh district. The Varendra are settled in Rájsháhí, Pubna, Maldah, Bograh, Dinájpúr, as well as here and there throughout Farrídpúr, Jessore, and Kishnaghur.

The second and third tribes are so closely allied that the same gotras are common to both, and of late years they have been fast amalgamating: but the first and fourth, having no Kulins, are more conservative of old party customs. In Eastern Bengal the Bangaja tribe includes nine-tenths of the whole Káyath caste, while the remainder belong to the Dakhin Rárhí. The following remarks will therefore be confined to the former.

The Bangaja Káyaths have Ghaṭaks of their own, residing at Edilpúr, in Báqirganj, from whom the account of the various subdivisions has been obtained. The Ghaṭak registers go back twenty-three generations, to the fourteenth century, when the Muḥammadans had conquered the most important part of Bengal. It it probable, however, that the occurrences of a later age have been embellished by the traditions of an earlier, and that the present organisation of this great tribe was the work of a reformer who lived long after the reigns of Ádisúra and Ballál Sen. Whoever reorganised the tribe, he gave the rank of Kulin to the four families of—

Vasu or Bosu,	Gúha,
Ghoṣa,	Mittra;

while to Datta, who was of a proud and independent spirit, refusing to be the slave of any Bráhman, was allotted only a half Kul. On the other hand, Dutt, Nág, Náth, and a family of bondsmen, called Dása, were enrolled as Madhalya, or intermediate, Káyaths, with whom the Kulins may marry without loss of rank.

The following is a list of the gotras of the Kulin and Madhalya Káyaths, but the correct order of precedence is a subject of interminable dispute and heart-burning:—

	PADAVÍ.	GOTRA.
Kulin	Bosu	Gautama.
	Ghose	Sukláyana. Ṣáṇḍilya. Vátsya.
	Gúha	Kaṣyapa. Kálkisha.
	Mittra	Viṣvámittra.

	Padaví.	Gotra.
Madhalya	Dutt	Madhu-Kulyá. Sáṇḍilya. Agni-Vátsya. Bharadvája. Kaṣyapa. Krishnatreya. Vasishṭha. Aliman.
	Nág	Ṣápeyin.
	Náth	Paráṣara.
	Dása	Kaṣyapa. Madhu-Kulyá. Gautama. Aliman. Átreya.

The four families next in order are designated Mahá-pátra:—

Maha-pátra	Sena	Vásukí. Aliman.
	Singha..	Vátsya.
	Siṉha	Gautama. Ghṛita-Kauṣika.
	Dé	Aliman. Ghṛita-Kauṣika. Kaṣyapa. Paráṣara. Madhu Kulyá. Sáṇḍilya. Vátsya. Gautama. Bharadvája. Vasishṭha.
	Raha	Kaṣyapa. Madhu Kulyá. Aliman. Bharadvája. Krishnátreya.

Next below these are fifteen families, who by giving their daughters in marriage to Kulins, can raise themselves to the grade of Mahá-pátra, but a marriage of this nature brings a certain amount of discredit on the family of the bridegroom. The fifteen are—

Kara,
Dám,
Palit,
Chanda,
Pál,
Bhadra,
Dhar,
Nandí,
Kúnd,
Ṣome,
Rakhít,
Kúrú,
Bistu,
Addya,
Nandan.

Their gotras, being the same as those of the higher grades, do not require mention.

Regarding the still lower grades, different lists and names are given. According to some, they number seventy-two, but the "Samáj," or council of the Bangaja, only recognise thirty-two, while the larger number is met with among the Dakhin Ráṛhí Káyaths. The thirty-two grades are of very low birth, and Kulins who intermarry with them lose much, if not all, of their family prestige. The following names are not often met with nowadays, but a few are familiar to residents :—

Ketú,
Saí,
Sillya,
Kharma,
Ṣúr,
Sam,
Pahí,
Bidi,
Har,
Aditya,
Oi,
Bardhan,
Gam,
Brama,
Loadh,
Lodh,
Dhír,
Aich,
Bhúnja,
Naha,
Subodhid,
Híra,
Khíra,
Múscha,
Pyne,
Gorí,
Bhút,
Khírsan,
Poit,
Bag,
Balla,
Bal.

The higher grades of Káyaths will only eat with these when paid for so doing. Many of them are writers and educated men, but others are poor and illiterate peasants.

According to the census returns the Káyath caste numbers 1,160,478 individuals, a large proportion of whom are residents of the nine districts of Eastern Bengal. It is likewise remarkable that they are most numerous in Báqirganj (125,164), Mymensingh (105,537), Dacca (102,084), and Midnapore (101,663) districts, on the outer borders of the province, a circumstance that either indicates a descent from mixed races, or a special aptitude for development on the confines of advancing civilization. It must, however, be borne in mind that the term Káyath is often used by the lower classes of Bengal as the equivalent of Ṣúdra.

The Káyath caste is the most intellectual, and best educated in Bengal. Although of doubtful parentage it has from the earliest historical period been an ambitious and prosperous community, which even under Muhammadan rule held most of the financial and revenue appointments throughout India; and since the English occupation of the country has almost secured the whole of the subordinate Government offices. At present they are as skilful penmen, and as good English scholars as they were formerly Persian. Furthermore, there is perhaps more of a clannish spirit among them than among any other caste of Bengal.

Sir George Campbell describes the Káyaths as "decidedly dark, generally thin, spare men, and on the average short, with often sharp weasel-like features, small and quite low-Aryan." In Dacca the Káyaths are of a deeper brown colour than the Kulin Bráhmans, but every shade of brown may be met with. Some are large powerful men, but after thirty-five they become fat and sleek-headed, and generally indolent. Their undoubted talents are too often expended on chicanery and legal quibbles, and it is very rare to find in Eastern Bengal any highly educated men who love literature for its own sake, not for the favours it bestows. It may be safely said, that every Káyath can read and write Bengali, that a large majority are well versed in English, as taught in the schools, and that a few are acquainted with Sanskrit. It is, however, very seldom that a Káyath is found who can read Persian, as that language is deemed of little value by the Hindus of Bengal, and it is rare indeed for a Hindu boy to attend the Persian class at college.

It is a melancholy fact that this clever and rising caste should always have been extravagant and dissipated. None of the large Zamíndárs of Eastern Bengal are Káyaths, and few families are, as regards wealth, on an equality with the Bráhman and Baidyá houses. Many reasons are given in explanation of this anomaly. Káyaths held almost all the lucrative posts under the Muhammadan rulers of Bengal, were farmers of the revenue, and were not often credited with tender feelings or conscientious doubts. As was said of them by a Muhammadan, who knew them well, they were like a sponge, imbibing what they could on all occasions, but parting with their plunder as readily as it does when squeezed. Whenever a revenue officer was reported to have accumulated wealth, he received a summons to Murshídábád, and was compelled to give up all that he had, or become a Muhammadan. In former days, moreover, the rank of a Káyath depended much on the number of slaves he retained, and wonderful stories are told of the swarms of dependants belonging to the old families. Their marriage ceremonies, likewise, and their religious rites, have always been accompanied by more ostentation and lavish expenditure than with other castes. Dissolute and intemperate habits were natural consequences of an uncertain position. Rich to-day, they might be beggars to-morrow, and the savings of years might be swept away by a word from the Nawáb. But, even after a century of peace and security, the Káyaths are the same improvident people they were under the Mughal dynasty.

The Ṣákta worship generates drunkards, and no one can be a devoted worshipper without drinking spirits to a fearful extent. While the doctrines of Chaitanya have united almost all the artisan and agricultural castes in a common faith, the immoral Ṣákta ritual is observed by the three highest and most intelligent of the Hindu castes, namely, the Bráhman, Baidyá, and Káyath. All Kulin Káyaths, and three-fourths of the other subdivisions, follow the Ṣákṭa worship, and one-half of these celebrate the "Vahmachárí Áchár," or Chakra rites. By this, intoxication is legalised and made a religious duty, while obscenity is countenanced and enforced. English education has not as yet reformed them, and probably at no former period was intoxication so universal and habitual as at the present day.

These strictures, true of the caste collectively, are unjust towards many of the most philanthropic and excellent native gentlemen to be met with in Bengal, who lament the degradation of their brethren, and do their utmost to stem the torrent of unbelief and immorality which is destroying the noblest qualities of their countrymen. As yet their endeavours have proved ineffectual, but it is for the rising generation to realize their position, to denounce the vices of their brethren, and to assume the lead in the advancement and in the civilization of their countrymen.

A Kulin Káyath family is almost as exclusive as that of a Kulin Bráhman, and it is equally dependent on the Ghaṭak for the preservation of its station and purity. A member of this class can only retain his rank by marrying the daughter of a Kulin, or by giving his son or daughter in marriage to a Kulin family. Should any family during three generations neglect to form an alliance with another Kulin family its patrician dignity is lost; but a single, or even a second, *mésalliance* does not lower the credit of the house. Families who have always intermarried with Kulins are called "Gangá-tírtha" Kulins, being regarded as the purest.

When a Kulin Káyath is degraded, he never can regain the position he has lost, but his descendants, by marrying Kulins, thenceforward become known as "Kulaja." Finally, should a Kulin marry a daughter of the Kulaja, or Madhalya classes, he continues to preserve his respectability. This union is called

"Viṣráma-sthán." Adopted children, moreover, do not acquire the position of the person adopting them.

Like other clean Ṣúdra castes who follow the Ṣákta ritual, the Kulin Káyath has a private temple, or sacred nook, where a Ṣiva-linga is erected, and daily worship performed by the head of the household. All Káyaths, except those of the Vaishnava sect, observe the Ṣrí Panchamí, or "Dawát Píujah," on the fifth of the waxing moon in Mágh (January-February). This festival is held in honour of Sarasvatí, the goddess of learning, who, strange to say, is regarded by both Káyaths and prostitutes as their patron deity. On this day the courts and all offices are closed, as no Hindu penman will use pen and ink, or any writing instrument, except a pencil, on that day. When work is resumed a new inkstand and pen must be used, and the penman must write nothing until he has several times transcribed the name of the goddess Durga, with which all Hindu epistolary correspondence begins. Káyaths are expected to spend the holiday in meditating on the goddess Sarasvatí after they have observed certain religious rites, and sacrificed a kid to Káli, or Durga; but in reality they spend it in immorality and dissipation, for which reasons the "goddess of learning" has in some way come to be regarded as the tutelary deity of the "Pesháhgar." On this day the Káyath must taste of a Hilsá fish, whatever its price, while from the Srí Panchamí festival in January to the Vijaya Daṣamí in September or October, fish must be eaten daily; but from the last to the first month it must not be touched. This curious custom, probably founded on some hygienic superstition, is often reversed by Bengali Káyaths.

As much as a thousand, and occasionally two thousand, rupees are paid by a bride's father to a Kulin Káyath at his marriage, but formerly either fourteen or twenty-one rupees were the recognised sums given, and even now, the formality is gone through of asking the bride's father if he has received that amount, although it is not the custom to accept it. In old families the Purohit officiates at the marriage service, and before it a fast is observed, during which Kálí is worshipped.

The chief strength of the Brahmo Samáj lies in the ranks of the Káyaths, and every Káyath boy attending the Government college becomes a member of this new sect. These boys are necessarily outcasted, and unless their parents cease to associate with them, expulsion befalls the whole family. On returning home a Brahmo boy is not permitted to enter his father's house, but is fed and entertained by himself in an outhouse. In Dacca a few Brahmo households exist, the males and females of which have become Brahmos and Brahmikas, but a few faint-hearted individuals, Brahmos in Ḍacca, are Hindus at their homes. There is reason for anticipating that the whole caste will very soon become Brahmos. The Káyaths have time on their side, and are confident that Brahmoism is the destined religion of the Hindus, and that the Crescent will go down before the hosts of Deism. Great rejoicings were lately made on the occasion of the conversion of Záhiruddín of Sunnárgáon, a student of the Dacca college. He was secretly made a Brahmo, and named Jáí Náráyana. Subsequently he became a "Prakásh," or perfect Brahmo, receiving the title of Jala Dhar Bábu, which entitled him to eat and drink with the Káyaths.

Throughout the eastern districts of Bengal there is a very numerous body of natives called Ghulám, or slave, Káyaths, and also known as Shiqdár, or Bháṇḍárí. Their existence as an adjunct, or graft, of the Káyath stock is both interesting and peculiar, and would appear to explain the obscure and heterogeneous character of the main stem. The Ghulám Káyaths are descended from individuals belonging to clean Ṣúdra castes, who sold themselves, or were sold, as slaves to Káyath masters. It is stoutly denied that anyone belonging to an unclean tribe was ever purchased as a slave, yet it is hard to believe that this never occurred. The physique of the low and impure races has always been better than that of the pure, and on account of their poverty and low standing a slave could at any time be more easily purchased from amongst them. However this may be, it is an undoubted fact that any Ghulám Káyath could, and can, even at the present day, if rich and provident, raise himself by intermarriage as high as the Madhalya grade, and obtain admission among the "Bhadra-lok," or gentry of his countrymen.

For the following translation of a deed of sale I am indebted to the late Bábu Brijo Sundar Mittra, a scion of one of the oldest and most respected Káyath families of Dacca:—

"I, Rám Kisto Pál, son of Túla Rám Pál, and grandson of Rám Deva Pál, do hereby execute this deed of sale.

"Owing to the debts incurred at my marriage, and which I am unable to pay, I, in my proper mind, and of my own free will, sell myself to you on my receiving a sum of Púrojonodohomasi[1] rupees twenty-five, and I and my descendants will serve you as slaves as long as we are given subsistence allowance and clothing, you, your sons, and grandsons shall make us work as slaves, and have power to sell, or make a gift of us to others. On these conditions I execute this bond.

"Dated 19th Kártik, 1201 B.S. (November, 1794)."

Although slavery is illegal, and has been so for many years, the buying and selling of domestic slaves still goes on, and it may be safely said that there is hardly a family of any distinction which has not several Bháṇḍárís on its establishment. The life of the Nafr, or Shahna, as the slave is called in other parts of the country, is most congenial to the Bengali. With rare exceptions he is kindly treated, and in return he regards the welfare and happiness of each member of the family as inseparable from his own. Owing to the deaths of their masters many thousands are scattered throughout Bengal, who are found working at all trades, and do not consider themselves degraded by holding a plough or wielding a mattock. In Bikrampúr they are often boatmen, while in Dacca Káyaths are employed as confectioners, coolies, brasiers, shopkeepers, and venders of Pân and Indian hemp.

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[1] Mr. J. D. Ward, C. S. suggests the following reading and interpretation: Púra (full), jana, or gaṇa, dáhá (ten), másha. Each rupee was to value ten full máshas. A "másha" equalled $17\frac{3}{8}$ grains, and a rupee ten máshas.

Bráhmans, Baidyás, Sáhas, and Banyas possess slaves, but none of these castes have ever permitted their servants to rise in rank, or assume an equality with their masters. It is suggested by the Káyaths that the Ghulám Káyaths of the present day are the descendants of the tribe resident in Bengal before the advent of the Kanauj families; but this conjecture is erroneous, for not only are individuals being added even now to the servile branch, but admissions such as that of Rám Kisto Pál, the subject of the deed of sale (who was a Telí by caste), can be proved by existing documents.

The honorary titles borne by the Káyath families are numerous. The most common are Biswas, Bhúmika, Ḍhálí, Majumdár, Qanúngo, Mahalla-nawíz, Paṭṭadár, Shíqdár, Niyogí, Mustaufí, and Mushrif. Besides these official distinctions, the Rájas of Chandradwíp conferred others, such as Dastá-dár, Thakúrta, and Munçif, which are borne by Guha and Ghose families at the present day. From these titles we learn that formerly the Bengali Káyath wielded other weapons than the pen, and that while some fought in the ranks as shield-bearing (Ḍhálí) soldiers, others commanded as brigadiers (Dastádár).

In olden times the most famous Káyath family in Bengal was the "Banga Adhikárí," which gave for many generations the Qanúngoes, or finance ministers, to the province. Their residence was in Dacca so long as the seat of government was there, and a bazár near their mansion is still named Ráí Bazár. A private idol, known as Ṣama Ráí, has for two centuries been maintained by the rent of a piece of land. Early in the eighteenth century the family removed to Murshídábád, where its representatives still reside.

The leading Kulin Kayáth family of Dacca is the family of Bose, or, as they prefer calling themselves, Bose-Ṭhákúrs, of Bose-nagar in Bikrampúr. The founder of the house was Deví Dás Bose, Qanúngo of the Nawárah Mahall, whose Muḥarrir, or clerk, was Kṛishna Jívana Majumdár, father of the celebrated Rájah Ráj Bullabh. An old building at Bose-nagar still bears an inscription put up by the builder, Deví Dás, with the date A.H. 1087 (1676).[1]

The oldest and most respected house among the Bangaja Káyaths, however, is that of Chandradwíp. For seventeen generations the family has dwelt in Báqirganj, and its head has always been the Samáj-pati or president of the caste.[2]

HINDUSTÁNÍ KÁYATHS.

At the present day the Lálás, as they are called, only occupy some four houses in Dacca, but formerly they were numerous and influential. The families belong to the Ṣri Bástab sub-caste, and claim to be descended from Káyaths who accompanied Rájah Man Singh to Dacca in the sixteenth century. In former days important official posts were held by them, such as that of Díwán and Bakhshí. The Díwáns of Nawábs Hasmat Jang and Naçrat Jang were Lálás, but on the death of the last Nawáb in 1843 their families returned to Hindustán. The few who remained behind being poor, accepted service as policemen, Dároghas, and writers. Their general poverty is ascribed to the danger of owning land under the Muhammadan rule, when they were in a position to acquire it.

A few miles north of Dacca an estate, or Ta'luk, is held by the descendants of a certain Jáí Singh, a Hindustání Káyath, and famous killer of tigers. The honorary title of " Bághmárá," and a grant of land, were conferred, on condition that he and his heirs annually presented a live tiger to the Nawáb at Dacca.

KEWAṬ KEOT.

A colony of this widely dispersed fisher caste has for centuries been settled in the city of Dacca, where they occupy from twenty to thirty houses; but no traces of them are to be found in the interior of the district. A tradition still survives that they were brought from Bihár by the Muhammadan rulers, and employed as messengers and watchmen.

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[1] The only other Hindu inscription in Dacca older than this is one on a Ṣiválaya at Baishthia, near Mánikganj, belonging to the Guha Majumdár family, with the date 1518 Ṣaka, or A.D. 1440.

[2] "J. A. S. of Bengal," vol. xliii, 205.

Buchanan was of opinion that the Kewaṭ and Kaibartta originally belonged to one caste, aboriginal to Bengal; but, whether this opinion is well founded, or not, the Dacca Kewaṭs repudiate all relationship with the Kaibarttas, although they do not object to eat or smoke with them. At the present day the Kewaṭ is met with in every part of Bengal. In Orissa it is the most numerous of the fisher tribes, polling 150,387 persons; in Chota Nágpore it comprises 6,191, in Assam 31,300, and in Bihár 135,692. In the Bengal census return the Kewaṭ is included, along with others, under Jeliya, a comprehensive term for all fishermen.

The Kewaṭ caste has three subdivisions, Seo Rámí, Gauṛi or Gonṛhi, and Dhun Kewaṭ, who eat together and intermarry.

In Bihár and Rangpúr Kewaṭs are either fishermen or cultivators; in Assam and Orissa fishermen; while in Dacca, having relinquished fishing, they have generally adopted the occupation of fishmongers, although a few are Podárs or bankers. The Kewaṭ fishmonger usually makes advances to the fishermen, and finds it more profitable to buy small fish by the basket, and large ones by weight, than haggle for each day's catch. The Kewaṭ generally brings the supply from the fishing ground himself, if it is near; but a servant is sent if it is distant.

In Assam the Kewaṭs have separated into two septs, the Halwah, who are cultivators worshipping Kṛishna, and Jaliya, or fishermen following the tenets of Muhammadanism.[1] Buchanan records[2] the curious fact that the Kewaṭs had become Muhammadans in Rangpúr. Equally strange the Dacca Kewaṭs have become followers of the Nának Sháhí faith. Their Guru is the Mahant of the Shújá'at-púr Akháṛá; their Purohit a Maithila Bráhman, called Sám-ojha.[3] The Kantha Bráhman performs their funeral service, and attends at the Ṣráddha observed fifteen days after death; but he is charged with being extortionate, and with demanding more than poor Kewaṭ families can afford.

The Dacca Kewaṭs are all included in one gotra, the Kaṣyapa, and though domiciled in Bengal are not excluded from caste privileges when on a visit to Bihár. Owing to association with more enlightened races, widow marriage has been discontinued; but in Mungír Kewaṭ widows still practise it.

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[1] Robinson's "Assam," p. 263.

[2] "Eastern India," iii, 530.

[3] Perhaps Ṣam-yája.

The great annual festival of the Kewaṭs of Dacca is the Nauámí, or ninth lunar day of Paush (December-January), when every one visits the Akhárá, and after prayers, receives "Mohan Bhog," a sweetmeat specially prepared for the occasion. The Chhaṭh, on the sixth of Kártik, is a great bathing rite observed by Kewaṭs, and all Hindustání castes; while the Ganga Pújah, as well as the principal Hindu festivals, are kept. Sacrifices, too, are offered at the proper seasons to Bura-Buri.

KHATRÍ, CHHATRÍ.

In 1872 there were 117,508 Chhatrís resident in Bengal, of whom 14,393 belonged to the eastern districts. There are, however, reasons for supposing that these figures include many individuals having no claim to the rank of Rájputs, for the Surájbansís, Manipúrís, and Kachharís, who call themselves Chhatrís, are offshoots of the great Indo-Chinese family.

The Chhatrís occupy twenty houses in Dacca at the present day. Too poor to become traders, and too proud to cultivate the soil, they obtain employment as post-office clerks, constables, and "Dároghas." The majority belong to the Pachhániya branch of the caste, but members of the Khanna, Chopra, and Dhanwar tribes are met with, who having married with lower grades have severed all connection with their homes. The Purohit of the Dacca Chhatrís is a Sarsút or Sarasvatí Brahman, who pays an annual visit to his flock. Chandika, a form of Durgá, is the patron deity of the caste; but each gotra has its own peculiar idol.

Chhatrís are invested with the sacred cord when eight years old, and individuals who minister at certain religious observances have a thread of one more ply than those who do not.

At Chhatrí marriages the bride, as with Muhammadans, remains in the inner apartments, and the "Manḍúá" is erected in an inner courtyard, where the service is performed.

An interesting tradition connects the modern Khatrís with the foundation of the Muhammadan city. When the Khatrí, Rájah Man Singh, in 1595, occupied Dacca with the Mughal army, and encamped on a tract, cleared of jungle, ever since called Urdú, an image of Durgá, said to have been the property of Veda-bati, the divorced wife of Ádisúra, was found, and deposited in a shrine, called Dhakeṣvarí, still regarded as the palladium of the city. At the present day the revenue of this sanctuary is divided between several old Khatrí families and the Brahmáchárí Mahant of the Ramná Ákhárá.

At Páíkpáṛa, and in villages around Barmí Hât on the Lakhya, reside a class of Hindus, calling themselves Ráṇḍá,[1] or Randak, Khatrí, who give a confused account of themselves, repeating the names of Ballál Sen and Rájah Man Singh, as if connected in some mysterious way with their settlement in Bengal and their degraded position among Hindus. Kanaujiyá Bráhmans officiate as Purohits, and a Bengali Bráhman of Pancha Ṣára, near Rámpál, as Guru. The majority follow the worship of Kṛishna, but a few that of Ṣiv. Being naturalised Bengalis they have relinquished the names of former gotras, and adopted the common Ṣúdra one, Alimàn. Ṣúdras eat with them in private, but in public refuse to touch their water pots. They are employed as cultivators, shopkeepers, and Ta'llukdárs.

KÍCHAK, KÍCHAKA.

The Kíchak is one of the wandering predatory tribes met with in various parts of Bengal, characterized by the peculiar physiognomy of the Indo-Chinese races. Their home is properly the Morang, or Nepál Taráí, but gangs of them have settled in the north-eastern districts of Bengal.

It is not admitted in Nepál that the Kíchaks and Kiráts,[2] or Kirantís, are the same, an opinion held by Buchanan;[3] but it is beyond a doubt that they are both scions of a pure Turanian stock, and that they live together in Dinájpúr, a part of the ancient Matsyadesh, in Sikhim, and in Nepál.

The Kirantís, again, are identified by Col. Dalton[4] with the Kharwárs of Sháhábád, a tribe of undoubted Turanian descent; while B. H. Hodgson[5] includes the Kíchaks among the broken sub-Himálayan tribes, which he designates Awalia, from their power of withstanding damp or malaria (Sanskrit Ola), along with the Kochh, Garo, Bodo, and Dhimal. They are, moreover, classified with the later Turanian immigrants from the north, and their language is pronounced to be of the complex or pronomenalized type tending, like their physical attributes, towards assimilation with the Dravidian, or the Santal dialect.

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[1] Ráṇḍá, in Bengali, means "childless." Raṇḍa, in Sanskrit, means barren.

[2] Kiráta, literally means one living outside the city, and was applied to different aboriginal tribes dwelling on the east of Bhárata. Dr. Daniel Wright, writing from Katmandoo, in April, 1875, says, that in the Morang are two tribes, included under the generic name Kíchak, called Kochyá and Mechya, who have no claim to be regarded as Kiráts. According to the Paṇḍits the genuine Kiráts are the Yakhas and Khombos of the eastern, and south-eastern parts of Nepál.

[3] "An account of the Kingdom of Nepál," p. 7.

[4] "Ethnology of Bengal," 128.

[5] "Essays," part ii, 14.

The Kíchak history is a strange and puzzling one. In the Mahábhárata, Kíchaka is the brother-in-law of Rájah Viráṭa, ruler of the Matsya country, who was slain by Bhíma, the second of the Páṇḍava brothers, for insulting his sister Draupadí. The next tradition, preserved by Buchanan,[1] is that the Kíchaks were subjects of Bhímsena, who was either a Rájput ruling their country, or a Kíchak himself. The inhabitants of Puraniyá, early in the present century, had confused accounts of ancient invasions, and conquests of the Kíchak tribe, and mentioned several old princes of Morang to whom worship was still paid, and whose usual priests, or "Pariyal," are said to have been descended from Kíchak warriors. Furthermore, a legend survives that Prithu, Rájah of Kámrúp, fearing that his purity would be defiled by the sight of an abominable tribe of "raw-eaters," called Kíchak, who were invading his kingdom, instead of leading his troops to battle, threw himself into a reservoir of water, and perished, leaving his capital and country to fall without a struggle into the hands of the barbarians. The causes which have reduced a powerful and aggressive people, as indicated by these tales, into the present abject condition of the Kíchak race, are difficult to explain. In habits they resemble the vagrant tribes of Nats Badhaks, and Siyál-Khors, fragments of primitive Indian races, whose genealogy has still to be written; while in features, complexion, and physique they approximate to the Mags and Chakmas of the south-eastern frontier.

The settlement of a gang of Kíchaks in the suburbs of Dacca has furnished a favourable opportunity of studying their peculiar customs and habits. In 1843, an extensive robbery was committed at Náráyanganj, an important town near Dacca, and all attempts to trace the robbers failed until suspicion fell upon a band of Nats, as they were called, who were then passing through the district. The whole party was apprehended, and the robbery brought home to several individuals belonging to it. Further enquiries revealed the existence of numerous allied bands in various parts of Bengal, and of one in particular, engaged as coolies at an Indigo factory, who supplemented their wages by robbing the villages around. Government directed the punishment of the guilty, and the location of the remainder under surveillance at Dacca, where they obtained employment under the municipality. It is said that about thirty men, besides women and children, were thus provided for, who though in a position most uncongenial to their tastes, have always proved good and useful citizens. Thirty years' contact with alien races, and isolation from their brethren, have produced great changes in their characters and habits, yet the Dacca Kíchaks still preserve many early associations and peculiarities.

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[1] "Eastern India," vol. iii, 39, 406.

According to them the Kíchak tribe has eight subdivisions, or septs, in the following order of precedence:—

Látia,
Sulukí,
Láthri,
Núniya,
Gangla,
Kaiya,
Dádar,
Chaya.

Members of the first four families form the hereditary priesthood, who officiate at all religious ceremonies; but should one of their representatives not be at hand, the head of the family, or party, may perform the service. Each subdivision has a Sardár or Rái, who is elected (Khun-bandhná) by manhood suffrage. It is a remarkable fact that no subdivision can enumerate more than eight Sardárs. The chiefs of the Sulaukí in order are Borak, Kabah, Dewa, Saláwat, Motí Rám, Madárí, and Bábú Rám; of the Lathrí, Hona, Kone, Babu Rám, Súbhá and Bahádar; of the Núniya, Udási, Kazania, Gora, Kutb, Rúrí, Nafar, Dhun Singh, and Usman. The names of the chiefs, as well as those of the different septs are mainly Hindi, an indication that they were given in comparatively modern times, when the tribe broke up into two divisions, one inhabiting the plains, the other the sub-Himálayan Taráí.

A Pancháít, as among Hindus, settles all disputes, and punishes the guilty; while in olden days it passed sentence of death on spies and informers.

Their religious belief is very simple. God as an abstract conception is an incomprehensible idea, but when thunder rolls overhead they say it is the voice of Gokháin (Gosáin). Furthermore, they have a fetich in the oval, bright scarlet-coloured seeds of the "Rakta Chandana"[1] (*Adenanthera pavonina*), but it is difficult to ascertain the exact meaning attached to them. It may be that the wondrous colour and rarity of the seeds have excited their astonishment, and suggested in some undefined way the action of a powerful and benevolent spirit, of whose power they are the visible symbol; but the mysterious respect with which they are treated, and the worship that is paid, presupposes the existence of a spirit embodied in their substance, or acting and communicating its power through them. Whatever be the true explanation of the selection, each Kíchak carries a few wrapped in his waist cloth, and, whenever a marauding expedition is starting, each man arranges the seeds on the ground before him, saturates them with sweet oil, makes obeisance, and prays for success in the coming journey. The spirit that watches over them is called "Ákhá," but they also believe in the existence of domestic or household gods, symbolized by small brass idols, called "Deví Durgáo," and corresponding to the Grámdevatas of the modern Bengali villages.

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[1] The seeds are in general use as weights by goldsmiths, and are often strung on a thread to form a necklace. The same Sanskrit name is given to the red Sandal wood tree (*Pterocarpus Santalinus*) of the Coromandel coast.

On critical occasions the chiefs sacrifice a goat to "Ákhá," but this is neither an usual nor obligatory act.

Kíchaks bury their dead, placing in the hands of the corpse a few copper coins, and depositing in the grave, water, sweetmeats, rice, and spirits. Their ideas of a future state are confused and rudimentary, and when asked to give a reason for placing perishable articles in the grave, they either reply that their fathers did so, or that it is good for the deceased person to have them.

Kíchaks eat the flesh of almost all animals, but never touch beef. They are very partial to the flesh of the Iguana (Gohsámp), jackal, pig, and civet cat (*Viverra*), but the flesh of snakes is abhorred. Intoxication is universal, and every domestic occurrence is commemorated by a feast, at which an unlimited quantity of coarse fiery spirits is consumed. Polygamy is practised, but three wives are considered enough for the greatest chief. Divorce is common and fashionable, and the marriage bond is easily unloosed, although it has been tied in the presence of the assembled tribe. Social prejudices are unknown, and they have no scruples in eating with Hindus, Muhammadans, or Christians. Omens derived from the appearance, cries, or movements of animals are, as with the Thugs, universally relied on as having a perceptible bearing on the issue of voluntary acts. If a jackal calls in front, or on the right hand, of a gang starting on an expedition, the departure is postponed, but if it howls in the rear, or on the left hand, the augury is favourable, and the start is at once made.[1] This strange belief in the prescience of the jackal has gained for the Kíchaks another appellation, that of "Loharí Khánu.

In former days the tribe was armed with iron weapons, but as these led to identification, they have been laid aside, and bamboo spears and swords are made as required, and thrown away as soon as the work of the party is completed.

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[1] The manifestation of an omen is interpreted in a variety of ways by different tribes. Among the Thugs an omen on the right hand was portentous, on the left auspicious at the beginning, but the reverse at the end of an expedition; while a pair of jackals moving in either direction in front was ominous.

About thirty years ago[1] the chief Sardárs held Mustájiri, or farmed land, and it was alleged that the Sardárs, along with the Mundle, village officials, and even the police, participated in the plunder brought home by the gangs. Before an expedition started, the Pancháít met and fixed its strength, the individuals who were to compose it, and the rates at which the booty was to be allotted. The Sardár got a double portion, while men, women, and children shared equally. The widows and children of any man killed, or who died, either received a large donation or a pension, so long as the widow remained unmarried. Finally, goats were sacrificed, fidelity pledged, and, after dipping the fingers in the blood of the victims, the flesh was eaten, and spirits drunk.

The Kíchak language is mainly Hindustání, with words derived from hill tribes residing along the northern frontiers of Bengal. In the following vocabulary sixty per cent. of the words are either pure, or broken, Hindustání, while a few of the remainder are traced to races living in proximity to the Kíchaks.

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[1] "Asiatic Journal," 3rd series, vol. i, 466; iii, 192.

COMPARATIVE VOCABULARY OF THE KÍCHAK LANGUAGE.

English.	Kíchak.	Hindustání.	
One	Ekuch	Ek.	
Two	Bay	Do.	
Three	Ten	Tín.	
Four	Chari	Char.	
Five	Panchi	Panch.	
Six	Khoi	Chha.	
Seven	Khat	Sat.	
Eight	Athi	Áth.	
Nine	Lau	Nau.	
Ten	Dokh	Das.	
Twenty	Bikh	Bis.	
Hundred	Khan	Sau	In Lepcha Kha-phagnón.
I	Hu	Ham the plural often used for singular.	Han is Lepcha for thou, Heu for he, she, it.
Me	Munha	Mujhe.	
My	Marhan	Mera.	
Hand	Hathli	Háth.	
Foot	Gorang	Goṛ.	
Eye	Dhola	Ankh.	
Mouth	Bhakho	Munh.	
Nose	Nak	Nak.	
Ear	Kabanawna	Kán.	
Mother	Ai	Má	In Bhutaní Ai; in Naga Aio, or Aia.
Father	Aga	Báp	Bhutaní Appa; Lepcha Abo; Naga Apú.
Brother	Bayo	Bháí.	
Sister	Bai	Bahin.	
Husband	Dhani	Khaṣam.	
Wife	Dhaniyani	Jorú.	
Mother-in-law	Khaku	Sás.	
Father-in-law	Khokaru	Sasur.	
Brother-in-law	Khala	Sálá.	
Sun	Dan	Súraj	In Daffla Doni; in Miri Daania; and in Abor dani.
Moon	Ujiyali	Chand	Ujálá Hindi, light.
Water	Pani	Pání.	
Spirits	Gutttarans, Daru	Dárú.	
Fire	Agi	Ág.	
Gold	Kaban	Soná.	
Cow	Dhara	Gorú.	
Calf	Neru	Lerú.	
Jackal	Lohari	Gídaṛ.	
Ass	Gadhro	Gadhá.	
Horse	Ghoro	Ghoṛá.	
Dog	Luria	Kuttá.	
Elephant	Kubran, Kuban	Háthí.	

KOCHH-MÁNDAI.

On the north of Dacca is situated the jungly and generally uncultivated tract of Bhowál, extending, without any important break, to the foot of the Garo hills. Here and there is to be found a people calling itself Kochh-Mándai,[1] the latter word in the Garo language signifying man. In the census returns of 1872, the Kochh and Mándai are erroneously separated into two tribes, the former numbering in the Dacca district 10,928, the latter only 309. In Mymensingh, again, there are entered 12,420 Kochh, and 5,901 Mándai.

The Kochh-Mándai, having preserved no traditions of their origin, are convinced that the villages of Bhowál were the primitive homes of their fathers. All connection with the Rájvaṉsí of Kochh Bihár, or the Hill Garos, is disowned. Mr. Taylor[2] identified them with the Pání Kochh of Dinájpúr, and his conjecture seems well grounded. When the Kochh, in the sixteenth century, under Haju invaded Kámrúp, expelling the Kachári, or Chutia dynasty, a remnant of the vanquished people was left, who, separated more and more from the parent stem, not only by the extension of the Kochh power, but also by incursions of Aryan and Muhammadan races, gradually lost the peculiar characteristics of their ancestors.

The adoption of the name Kochh by the vanquished is not singular, for Colonel Dalton is of opinion that Garos, or a kindred tribe, took the name of Pání Kochh to conciliate the ruling power, and Captain Williamson is the authority for a still more recent change of name on their part. The Daloo clan of Hill Garos about a century ago emigrated to the plains, and married Hajong women. In a few years, having laid aside the national dress, and disowned all relationship with the Hill men, they now claim to be genuine Hajongs. Unless for one or other of these reasons, it is difficult to understand how a tribe, speaking a language composed of many Garo and no Kochh words, relinquished their national name, and adopted that of Kochh-Mándai.

The vernacular is not pure Garo, but a patois made up of words derived from other Hill languages. The Garo numerals have been lost, and Bengali ones made use of, but at present few can speak Bengali, or ever learn more than is necessary for the purposes of buying and selling.

The Kochh-Mándai being an unwritten language, the following vocabulary is given according as the words are pronounced:

Man, Mandai (Garo).
Woman, Mandai-matali.
Wife { Michik (G).
Jik (G).

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[1] Perhaps the Mandei of Pliny.

[2] "Topography of Dacca," p. 239.

Husband, Shai.
Boy, Mia-dosha.
Girl, Maipa-dosha.
Daughter, Dampsi.
Sister, Nagadai.
Brother, Jangodai.
Tree, Phang (Bodo).
Dog, Achak (G).
Water, Chhi (G).
House, Nak (G).
Iron, Sil (G).
Fire, Wal (G).
Rice, Mai (G).
Rice plant, Maigul Mai.
Pepper, Jamsi.
Tiger, Matcha (G).
Boar, Wak (G).
Ear, Nahathong (Dhimal).
God, Madai (Mech).

Of these twenty-two words, eleven belong to the Garo language, one to the Bodo, Dhimal, and Mech respectively, while eight are foreign to any of these languages. The inference to be drawn from this is, that the Kochh-Mándai have been formed by the amalgamation of several kindred tribes, and the fusion of the different languages into one. A comparative list of words used by various races on the eastern frontier will be afterwards given, in which the predominance of the Garo element is very striking.

The Kochh-Mándai have many clans, or "Dúgús," named after certain places or hills in the Assam valley, and identical with the Máchongs, or Maháris, of the Hill Garos. The Garos generally name their clans after demons, rivers, hills, trees, or villages; but, as in the following instance, the most trivial circumstance may give origin to a new title. During the famine of 1770, a Bengali Nápit settled in the Hills, and married a Garo maiden of the Dophoo clan, who bore him many children. There being no Máchong open to them, a new one was created, called Dophoo-Nápit, which still exists. A correct list of all the Dúgús is difficult to get, but the following are the names of the twelve principal ones met with in Bhowál:—

Darang,
Darang-Chiachí,
Darang-Sandana,
Darang-Dambuk,
Darang-Dakal,
Maikun,
Nafak,
Chishim,
Doi,
Durgu,
Chanell,
Shayni.

It is noteworthy that five out of twelve of these names are derived from Darang in Assam, from which place they were probably driven by Assamese tribes. At the present day, though numerous in the eastern Duárs of Goálpára, no Garos dwell on the north of the Brahmaputra in the Darang district.

Another Dúgú, to which many of the Bhowál Kochh-Mándai belong, is worthy of notice. The Mándai name for a Mussulmán being Lori (Garo, Rori), the illegitimate children of Mándai women with Muhammadan villagers are enrolled in a Lari Dúgú, remarkable for observing the "Shab-i-barát" festival.

The members of all Dúgús being equal, they eat and drink together, and intermarry with women of their own or another clan. No council can legally meet, and no festive assemblage be complete, without a representative of each Dúgú being present.

The Kochh-Mándai are generally of a dark brown complexion, with prominent upper maxillaries, projecting lips, small black eyes obliquely set, retreating foreheads, and broad flat noses. The face is usually smooth, but when the beard and whiskers are grown they are scant and stunted. The ordinary build is short and squat. They are good-natured, inoffensive people, very sociable in habits, fond of music and dancing, and much given to intemperance. By Bengalis they are credited with being truthful, industrious, and virtuous.

Although the partially Hinduized Mándai worship Kálí, Durga, and other Hindu deities, they make offerings to the Ṣál tree (*Shorea robusta*), and under its branches sacrifice a pig to a being called "Játrá-mátá." They worship the sun with a bunch of flowers, propitiate the manes of their ancestors with the usual Hindu rites, and annually celebrate a joyous festival at the harvest home to the same Játrá-mátá. In a day in Mágh, but not on the Sankránti, they sacrifice a swine beneath a Ṣál tree to Bura-Buri, and, like the Doís, pray to Chandí before felling a forest tree. They have no Bráhmans, and no hereditary priesthood, so the oldest and most respected inhabitant presides at all village fêtes.

Women are treated as equals, and not like slaves, as is the custom among the Pání-Kochh. They neither weave nor spin, but are occupied with household affairs, and the cultivation of small patches of land. As a rule the women are not obliged to perform all the hard work as the Hill women are, and although permitted a freedom unknown either to Hindus or Muhammadans, their moral character has remained unsullied.

Marriages are much more free than among their neighbours, the bride and bridegroom being always known to each other before the wedding. Husbands, however, are not selected by the girls, as with the Hill Garos. Mándai women never intermarry with low Hindu castes, and have the reputation of being chaste and loving wives. The marriage ceremony is very simple. Turmeric is liberally sprinkled on the dresses of the couple, and of the assembled guests. The person who officiates pours water on the heads of the pair, and this *douche* is regarded as the sign of an irrevocable union. When the rite is concluded the rest of the day is given up to dancing, drinking, and general merriment, invariably ending in universal intoxication. The bridegroom does not reside in the bride's house, as is the case with many of the aboriginal tribes, but he enters at once on the responsibilities of wedded life.

The Mándai permit widow marriage, but for it they have adopted the usual Hindu term, Sagáí. When a widow, or widower, remarries, the wedding ceremony is not performed. The man merely asks the leave of the village elders to marry a certain woman, and if granted, he takes her home, and they are regarded as legally man and wife.

Adoption is sanctioned, but while a wife remains a member of her mother's Dúgú, an adopted child, on payment of a few rupees, belongs to that of the person adopting.

The Mándai burn their dead, and the relatives provide a feast for the mourners, at which as much fiery spirits are consumed as at any Irish wake.

The dress of the Mándai is that of the Bengali lower classes, but they show a greater partiality for bright colours, especially blue ones. The only musical instrument in ordinary use is the drum (Ḍholak), to the monotonous beat of which men and women listen attentively, or dance vigorously, for hours.

The Mándai mother is unclean for eleven days after childbirth; but is not allowed to resume household duties for at least two months longer. The family also remains impure for eleven days after a death, at the expiration of which period a feast being given to all the Dúgús of the neighbourhood, the family again becomes pure.

The Mándai, though settled, only pay rent to the Zamíndár when they cultivate the soil, no money being exacted for a temporary encampment, or for the land on which the village is built. They cultivate the "Baíds," or glades, with rice, and the hard laterite soil of the hillocks, or "Ṭílás," being ploughed, is planted with small patches of mustard, til, tobacco, and various pulses. Jute has of late years become a favourite crop, and, in the midst of the forest, fields of this valuable product are to be met with. The young men are fond of sport, catching deer, teal, and wild birds. They also collect honey for sale in the bazaars. Fishing is not engaged in to any great extent, and only for household supply. The villagers also cut down trees, hewing them into logs for firewood, or for manufacturing charcoal.

The Mandai have yielded so far to Bráhmanical influence as not to eat the domestic fowl, which they rear; but have no objection to kill, and feed on, the wild jungle cock. They are fond of kid's flesh, and of swine, whether wild or domesticated. Dogs, cats, frogs, and snakes, favourite articles of Garo *cuisine*, are abhorrent to the Mándai.

Slavery is unknown. When a debt is incurred the cattle are usually mortgaged to the creditor, but if the debtor be poor he may voluntarily serve until the debt is worked off.

COMPARATIVE VOCABULARY OF THE KOCHH-MÁNDAI, AND OTHER KINDRED TRIBES, INHABITING THE FRONTIER OF EASTERN BENGAL.

English	Kochh-Mándai.	Kochh, Garo Hills.	Hodgson's Kochh.	Hill Garos.	Bodo.	Dhimal.
Woman	Mandai Matali Michik	Magju	Beti-Choa	Michik	Hinjou	Beval.
Boy	Mia Dosha	Sasa	Chengra	De pisa De fante	Hiwa-gotho	Wajan.
Girl	Maipu Dosha	Magju Sasa	Chengri	De Michik	Hinjou-gotho	Bejan.
Daughter	Dampsi	Magju Sasa	Beti	De Michik	Bishu	Chandi.
Sister	Nagadai	Janau	Bahin	Abi (elder) Ano (younger)	Bina-nou	Rima.
Brother	Jangodai	Bhai, or Jong	Bhai	Ada (elder) Jong (younger)	Bida	Yolla.
Tree	Phang	Pan	Gachh, Ped	Bol	Phang Bon-phang	Sing
Rice	Mai	Mai	Dhán	Mai	Mai	Bhako-om.
Paddy	Maigul-mai	Mai-fong	Dhan gachh	Mai-bi-fong	Mai-bi-fong	Bhako-om-Singh.
Pepper	Jamsi	Moichok	Morich	Jalika	Bánjalút	Morchi.
Tiger	Matcha	Macha	Bag	Matcha	Mocha	Khuna.
Wild Boar	Wak	Wak	Banwa-suar	Wak	Hagrani-yoma	Dincha Ko paya.

KOERÍ.

The Koerí, a very important agricultural caste of Hindustán, is closely allied to the Kurmí, with whom they drink, but do not eat, while the Kurmí attend their marriages, and partake of the feast.

Their subdivisions vary in different districts, but the few Koerí in Dacca claim to belong to the Kanaujiyá section. The respectful term by which to address them is "Mahto" (Sanskrit Mahátman, noble), but Muráo, greengrocer, is a common appellation, and Ḍhelphor, clod-breaker, a common nickname.

In Bihár, Koerís are employed as opium growers, in other parts of Hindustán as husbandmen and market gardeners, but in Dacca as constables and policemen.

In Arrah the Koerís, like the Kándús, worship the Pánch Pír, and hold a festival in their honour on the ninth and tenth days of the Dashará in Aṣwin (September–October). A few are found following the tenets of Kabír and Daryá Dás.

Koerí women are unclean for twelve days after childbirth, at the end of which time the mother bathes twice, and after each bath plasters the house floor. She then marks with red lead five spots on the rim of the well, draws a jar of water, and her purification is complete.

KUMÁR, KUMBHAKÁRA, KUMHÁR.

This caste comprises 281,758 persons in Bengal proper, and in Dacca they number 14,835. Those belonging to Eastern Bengal can give no history of themselves, but are satisfied with the following ridiculous story of their origin. At the marriage of Ṣiv, a "Ghaṭ," or water jar, was wanted, but no one could make it. The god therefore took a bead from his necklace, and with it created a potter; while with a second he made a woman, who became the potter's wife. The man was father of all such as work in pottery, and hence the name Rudra (a title of Ṣiv) Pál applied to all potters.

The Kumárs of Dacca have four subdivisions:—

Rudra Pál,
Baṛá Bhágiyá Kumárs,
Chhoṭá Bhágiyá Kumárs, or Miṭṭíya Kumárs,
Magí Kumárs.

The first three eat and drink together, but never intermarry. They have the same Purohit, and the only difference between them is, that the two former manufacture earthenware vessels for cooking purposes, while the last make water vessels, vats, and jars. The Baṛá Bhágiyá Kumárs, again, have separated into two clans, the first, descended from Tílak Pál, only make black utensils; the second, sprung from Mádhava Pál, like the Chhoṭá Bhágiyá, only manufacture red.

The Magí subdivision is outcasted, having a Purohit of its own. Their debasement is referred to the days when the Mags harried Eastern Bengal, and, entering houses, defiled the inmates.

There seems no reason, however, for concluding that these degraded potters are the offspring of Mags by Kumár women, as they resemble in every feature the genuine stock of potters.

With scarcely a single exception, potters are Vaishnavas in creed. They have only one gotra, the Aliman, and one patronymic, Pál. The caste is a clean Ṣúdra one, and the Bráhman is common to the Nava-ṣákhá.

In Dacca the manufacture of pottery is still in its infancy. The wheel in use is the Roman rota, a circular table of baked clay weighted along the rim, revolving rapidly on a pivot cut from the heart of a tamarind tree. The neck and shoulders of all globular vessels are made with the wheel (Chák); but the body is fashioned by hand, often by women. A round ball of hardened clay (Pítna) is held inside, while with a wooden mallet (Boila) the material is beaten from the outside into the requisite shape and thinness. Two kinds of earth are used by the Dacca Kumárs, one called "Báli," the other "Kála miṭṭí;" and one part of the former mixed with two of the lattter are employed in the production of the strongest pottery. For making the common red earthenware vessels, red laterite earth from Bhowál is used, the colour of the rim being deepened by coating it with a mixture of Catechu (Kath) and fuller's earth. The cheap red and black earthenware are both prepared with the same clay, the latter being blackened by covering up the kiln at a certain stage, and adding oil cake to the fire. Bengali potters cannot glaze, or fix the colours on the ware; but are content to paint the vessel after it has been baked. Their colours are always mixed with mucilage, obtained from Bela, or tamarind seeds. Red paints are prepared with red lead; yellow with arsenic (Hartál); green by mixing yellow arsenic and indigo; and black with lamp-black, charred rice, or "Nal" reeds. A gloss is often imparted with the white of duck's eggs, but as this washes off before long, "Garjan" oil is more generally used. Idols, toys, and tobacco-bowls, are also painted with these colours, and the images of deities are further embellished by having powdered mica sprinkled over them while the paint is still wet.

The manufactory of the Kumár well repays a visit. Beneath the same thatched roof are the kiln, store-house, and dwelling-house, while at the door the clay is prepared. The kiln is called the "Pon," from the Sanskrit Pavana, that which purifies, and the hut the "Ponghar." The kiln is divided into compartments, in which the newly made vessels are arranged, earth being heaped over all. Wood is never used to heat it, but grass, reeds, or bamboo stems are the ordinary combustibles.

The Dacca Kumárs manufacture bricks, tiles, earthenware of all shapes and sizes, idols, and toys; the two last being moulded, if of small size.

As long as there is no demand for articles of artistic beauty, Bengal pottery will remain in its present backward condition, while the necessity of scouring plates and dishes after each meal, and the obligation of breaking all cooking vessels after a death, or pollution from any cause, make Hindus prefer the cheap and brittle articles, rather than the more expensive and durable English ones. The most expert potters, those of Kishnaghar, are said to have acquired the art in Calcutta.

Although Kumárs are prohibited from using the Chák during the month of Baisákh, because Viṣva-Karma, the great artificer, rested from his labours during that month, they are permitted to dig and store clay. A potter never cultivates the soil, or serves as a domestic servant, but he has no objections to become a trader, a cloth merchant, a writer, or a servant to a shopkeeper. The village potter occasionally holds "Chákarán" land on the condition that he supplies the vessels required at all festivals observed by the Zamíndár, or the village community. Hindu households generally contract for their annual supply of earthenware, while a few pay the market rate for what is wanted. The pottery made at Ráí Bazár, in Dacca, bears a great name throughout Eastern Bengal, and in the cold season, boats laden with cocoa-nuts arrive from Sondíp, Noakhally, and Báqírganj, returning full of pots and pans from this mart. Vijayapúr, in Tipperah, is another bazár famous for the excellence of its pottery.

Kumárs still worship the ancient Vedic deities Agní, Brahma, Indra, and Pavana, and on the first of Jyeshṭha (May-June), at the termination of the idle month, special services are held in their honour, at the same time as the festival of Viṣva-Karma is celebrated.

In the city of Dacca the Kumárs have two Dals, or trades unions, one known as Islámpúr, the other as Bhágalpúr, after two quarters of the city where the potters chiefly reside; while outside the city every four or five villages have a Dal to promote the interests of the trade. The headman is styled Parámánik, who, on account of the increase in the size of the caste, is obliged to employ assistants, Náiks, or Gumáshtas. They are treated with little deference, and merely execute the orders of their master.

It is considered a dishonouring act for a Kumár to accept a wife without paying money to the father; of late years the price has risen so much that the poorer young men find it difficult to procure wives at all.

(*a*.) RÁJ-MAHALLIA KUMHÁRS.

This class of potters is quite distinct from the Khoṇṭá Kumhárs on the one hand, and the Bengali Kumár on the other. They originally came from Ráj-mahall with a member of the Banga Adhikárí family, and having tarried in Dacca for several generations, lost caste, while those who subsequently arrived from Hindustán were in their turn likewise degraded. There are about two hundred houses belonging to these potters in Ja'farganj, Sultánganj, Ráí Bázár, and Kárwán, suburbs of Dacca, and it is remarkable that the caste still speaks a language made up of Hindi and Bengali. Having been settled in Bengal for many years, the clean Ṣúdra castes drink from their water vessels, while the Ṣúdra Bráhman, and other servants, work for them. The Ṣráddha, moreover, is celebrated after thirty days, as with the Nava-Ṣákhá.

Their gotras are Kaṣyapa Kanaka, Ṛishí, and Aladoshí; the common title being Rudra Pál.

Ráj-mahallia Kumhárs have a curious custom, which is a source of much wit among Bengalis. They thatch the drying houses with green grass, merely fastening it down with weights, but never tying it, and when dry the thatch is used for lighting the kiln fire. They manufacture cooking pots for vegetables, milk-pans (Ras-dohana), and salvers on which sweetmeats and other delicacies are handed round at weddings, but will not make idols, or platters used in offerings to deities.

Like the Bengali Kumárs they do no work during the month of Baisákh, and on the first Saturday of that month celebrate the worship of Viṣva-Karma. Their trade implements and manufactures are, on that occasion, arranged on the top of the kiln, and ornamented with Bel leaves, while the usual oblations are presented. The Purohit, meanwhile, mutters a few incantations, soliciting the favour of the divine workman.

The wives of these Kumhárs assist their husbands, fashioning the globular part of the vessels, while the men make the necks and rims.

Kumhárs are singular in placing over their wells an earthenware rim, or "Chák," admirably suited for preventing the ingress of filth. It is made by themselves, but has not been adopted by any other class.

(*b*.) KUMHÁR.

This, the lowest of the potter tribe, is generally distinguished by the epithet Khoṇṭá, or debased, and claims to belong to the Maghaiyá potter family of Patna. They drink water from the vessels of the Kumárs, and the Kumárs from theirs, but hold no communication with the Ráj-mahallia Kumhárs. None of the other Bengali Ṣúdras, however, admit their equality.

The Kumhár has only one gotra, the Kaṣyapa, and in Bihár Paṇḍit is a respectful term of address. In Dacca they are all Nának Sháhís in creed, the Mahant of the Shujá'atpúr Ákhára being the Guru. They work throughout the month of Baisákh, and on the Dashará make oblations of rice, wheat-flour, clay, and red lead to Mahádeo, their patron deity.

Kumhárs only work with "Chikní-miṭṭí," or potter's earth, manufacturing with the Chák, or horizontal wheel, long necked flasks (Çuráhí), lotahs, pipes, waterspouts, balusters, (Gáradía), and toys, but never idols.

On the tenth day after death the Kanthá Bráhman performs a religious service at which he tastes the oblation rice. On the following day the Ṣráddha is celebrated as among Chaṇḍáls and Ekádaṣí Jogís.

KURMÍ, KUMBÍ, KUNBÍ.

This caste is one of the most widely scattered agricultural tribes in India, being, it is generally supposed, descended from a powerful aboriginal community, who retained a respectable position even after the Aryans had conquered Upper India.

Kurmís never agree about the seven divisions of their tribe, and few can even give their names; but those met with in Dacca belong to the Ayodhyá and Jaiswáṛá clans, while the only other divisions represented are the Ghameta, Maghaiyá, Kachísa, and Samsawar from Bihár.

The Ayodhyá claim to be of the highest dignity and purest blood, coming, as their name indicates, from Oude, where they are usually cultivators, while in Bengal they enlist as sepoys, or constables. Their common title is Mahto, but of late years Ráí and Singh have become fashionable. The Ayodhyá never intermarry with other Kurmís, and widow marriage is strictly forbidden. The Purohit is a Sákádvíp Bráhman, and the Guru an "Atít," or Vaishnava mendicant. The majority are followers of Kabír, Daryá Das, or Rámánand.

The Kumbin is unclean until three ceremonies have been performed. On the sixth day after birth the "Gulhattí Chhaṭhí" is observed, at which the mother is obliged to drink rice-gruel. On the twelfth day the "Bárahí," identical with the "Thál-vrata" of Bengali Muhammadans, is kept, and a feast provided for ten or twelve children. Lastly, on the twentieth day, the "Bísaí" is celebrated, when the mother paints the well with red lead, draws water, and becomes clean.

On the marriage day an entertainment was formerly given by the bridegroom, but the expense grew so heavy that the Kurmís very sensibly determined on abolishing the custom, and now refuse to ask for, or give money, on such occasions.

To render thanks for the harvest already reaped and garnered, as well as to ensure an abundant crop next season, the Ayodhyá Kurmís annually celebrate a harvest home in the following manner. In the centre of a piece of ground, levelled and plastered for the purpose, a lofty pole is erected to which the cattle are tethered, and made to tread the new wheat crop. This being finished, the pole is removed, and the hole filled with water, and the sweetmeat "Laḍḍú" consecrated to Maháde0, and Parameshvara, after which a feast (Jeonár) is given to the Bráhmans.

The Jaiswáṛá, less punctilious than the Ayodhyá, are husbandmen, proverbial for industry and skill, who, from indulging in spirits, and from permitting their widows to marry, are degraded. In Dacca they are chiefly employed as constables, acting however, if necessary, as coolies.

The Bengali Káyasth drinks from their vessels, and smokes their huqqas, but the Kurmí neither eats with them nor with the Koerís, Kándús, or Kahárs, although he drinks from their water pots.

The majority of Jaiswáṛá Kurmís are Pánch Píriyas, eating any animal offered as a sacrifice to a Hindu deity, and at the same time keeping the Muharram, and fasting during the Ramazán; while a few are followers of Nának Sháh and Kabír.

At marriages the bridegroom receives presents from the father-in-law, and the Manḍúá or Marocha is constructed as in Bengal.

The same purificatory rites are performed after a confinement as among the Ayodhyá division.

Finally, the Ṣráddha of a Jaiswáṛá Kurmí is celebrated after thirty days; of an Ayodhyá after thirteen.

LALBEGÍ.

The sweeper castes of India, vaguely styled Lalbegí, Khákrob, Bhangí,[1] Ráut, Helá, Halál-khor, Sekrí, or Chúhṛá, are remnants of semi-Hinduized aboriginal tribes, although the Puráṇas trace their origin to the issue of a Ṣúdra and a Bráhman widow. It was believed by the early residents in Bengal, that any Hindu expelled from his caste was obliged to herd with the Halálkhors, "the refuse of all tribes, poor unhappy wretches destined to misery from their birth;"[2] but this opinion was founded on ignorance, as outcast Hindus now, as in former days invariably join the ranks of Islám.

Under the Muhammadan government the sweeper tribes were employed as executioners, spies, and scavengers. Manouchi[3] informs us, that in the reign of Sháh Jahán they acted as sweepers in private houses, and picked up from slaves all the secrets of the family for the information of the Koṭwál, or head of the police. When Europeans first resided in India, cooks and domestic servants generally belonged to these vile tribes, and during the Mutiny of 1857, it was no uncommon thing to find a Mihtar engaged as the cook of a newly arrived English Regiment.

In Eastern Bengal the Lalbegí, Ráut, and Sekrí are met with in the large towns; but the regular sweepers employed in hospitals are the Bhúinmálís, or Háṛís, from Chittagong.

In the census reports of 1871 the sweeper tribes are all included under the generic term Mihtar, a name given by the Muhammadans in derision. In Bengal only 40,894 are entered under that head, but it is probable that this only includes the Hindustání emigrants, while in the north-west provinces in 1865 the census gave 310,795 persons.

Although in Oude the Mihtar tribes intermarry, in Bengal they will not even associate together.

The Lalbegí, who constitute the most important body, occupy twenty houses in the city of Dacca. They originally came from Upper India, some with Sepoy regiments, others as wanderers in search of work. Though styled Muhammadans they neither practise circumcision nor abstain from pork. The Lalbegí are employed as sweepers in European households, and are always addressed as Jama'dár by the other servants. On board the river steamers, again, the sweeper is called Topas, a term originally applied to a mean white, the offspring of a Portuguese father and an Indian mother.

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[1] This was also the title of one of the Sikh Misls, or confederacies. Cunningham's "History of the Sikhs," p. 106.

[2] "A View of the English Government in Bengal," by H. Verelst, p. 142.

[3] "Histoire générale de l'Empire du Mogol," par le Pére F. Catrou. À Paris, 1705, p. 271.

The Lalbegí eats everything that comes from the European table, although he will not eat with the Ráut, and drinks any sort of wine or spirits.

The religious rites of the tribe are partly Hindu, partly Muhammadan. As with Mussulmáns generally, marriages are arranged by an old woman. No Kabín, or marriage settlement, is drawn up, but an Ikrár, or bond, is executed, in which both promise to love one another, and the bridegroom testifies that he will not bring a second wife into his house. Previous to the wedding day the Kandúrí ceremony is observed, as well as other Muhammadan customs, but the services of the Áchárjí Bráhman are not required. Should the marriage be celebrated in the bridegroom's house a fee of twenty anas is paid to the Pancháít; if in the bride's only five anas.

A few of the Lalbegí keep the fast of Ramazán, although they dare not enter a public mosque.

Their funeral ceremonies differ greatly from the Muhammadans, and resemble in many points those of the Sants, which are probably survivals of an aboriginal cultus. The dead are not permitted to be interred in a Mussulmán cemetery, but are consigned to the tomb in some waste and jungly spot. The corpse is wrapped in five shrouds, a handkerchief is placed under each arm and in each hand, a Kasáwá, or napkin, is bound round the head, and a Khirqá, or blouse, is put on the body. After the grave has been filled in a cloth cover (Phúl ka Chadar) is laid over it, while four pieces of "Agar" wood are inserted at the corners, and set fire to. The rest of the funeral ceremonies are strictly Muhammadan. For four days after a death a fire is not allowed to be lighted in the dwelling-house of the deceased, the family in the meantime receiving food from their neighbours; but on the fifth day a tray laden with betle-nuts, and adorned with flowers, is placed in front of the hut, and a feast is given to the whole tribe.

The Lalbegís however, follow many Hindu customs, observing the Díwálí and the Holí as the greatest festivals of the year. On these occasions a mud image of a mosque with five domes is made, after the model of one still existing at Gaṛh Ghazní, in Kábul, which belonged to their eponymous ancestor, Lál Beg. In front of the image a cock is sacrificed, and offerings, consisting of a Puláo, Sharbat, and sweetmeats made in his name. This absurd story of their descent from a Mughal chief is analogous to the origin of the Bediyá from Núh Nabí. Lál Beg, however, is identified by Sir H. Elliot[1] with Lál Guru, the same as the Rákshasa Aroṇákarat; but in Benares[1] he is confounded with Pír Zahr, perhaps the famous Chishtíya saint, Sayyíd Sháh Zuhúr. In the Panjáb, again, Mihtars adore Lál Pír, or Bábá Faqír, as the dyers do Pír 'Alí Rangrez, and the blacksmiths Ḥazrat Dáúd. It is not improbable, therefore, that the Lalbegí, like many other tribes converted to Muhammadanism, have adopted a Muhammadan saint as their common ancestor around whom many idle traditions have been grouped.[2]

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[1] "Supplemental Glossary," i, 32.

LOHÁIT-KURÍ.

A small caste of Hindus known by this name is found along the banks of the Meghna, who represent themselves to be the descendants of a Kaibartta fisherman, bought during a season of famine by a "Kurí,"[3] or parcher of grain, who, in want of a caste, made that now known as Loháit-Kurí. This insignificant body has already separated into two subdivisions, those following the father's profession of fisherman having repudiated connection with the maternal branch, who parch grain.

The caste at present neither associates with the Kaibarttas nor the caste Kurí, or Madhu-Nápit. The majority are fishermen, who will not cast a net, or fish from the shore, but angle with a rod from boats drifting with the stream. They manufacture large rectangular iron (Lohá) hooks, with a shank nearly two inches long (hence the origin of the first part of their name), as well as cotton lines. Iron sinkers are preferred to leaden ones, and the only bait used is a small fish.

A Patit Bráhman ministers to them, and the Ṣráddha is kept at the expiry of a lunar month. Like other fishermen they observe the "Jal-palaní" for seven days. A heavy fee is paid for a wife, as the caste is a small one, and one hundred rupees are often invested in a suitable helpmate, but a widower has generally to expend two hundred. The Loháit-Korís carry on a considerable trade with their own boats; but will not accept service with any other caste.

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[1] Sherring, "Hindu Tribes of Benares," p. 397.

[2] There is a possible connection between Lál Beg and Bábú Lál, the founder of an Unitarian sect. "Religious Sects," i, 347.

[3] Buchanan found in Puraniyá a tribe of fishermen called "Kurí," some of whom spoke Bengali, others Hindi.

MADHU-NÁPIT.

The following story explains the origin of this caste. The Mahápurohit, Chaitanya having ordered two of his servants to shave him, they obeyed, but realised that they were outcasted. Troubled in mind they pointed out that expulsion from caste privileges was the penalty incurred by executing his command. Chaitanya accordingly bade them become confectioners, and make comfits for him.

The descendants of the two servants have ever since been employed as confectioners, and their purity, according to Hindu ideas, is so excellent that even goddesses partake of the good things they prepare.

The Madhu-Nápit is not included in the Nava-Ṣákha, but the caste Bráhman is the same as that of the clean Ṣúdras; and the water pots are quite pure. In creed the caste is Vaishnava. They have two gotras, Aliman and Kaṣyapa. Madak is the common appellation, but Bengalis often address them as Kurí, or Sáha-Ji; the latter, however, is a title given to any shopkeeper.

The Madhu-Nápit is the most respected confectioner in Eastern Bengal, for the caste Mayara or Madak, is rarely met with, and the Halwáí is usually a Ghulám Kayasth, a Khonṭa Bráhman, or a Kándú. Only ten houses are occupied by the caste in Dacca, but more reside in villages. These confectioners assume great airs, neither intermarrying with other castes, not even with barbers, nor shaving themselves. In former days they would not fry sweetmeats in Ghí, or butter, but now are becoming less fastidious. The common comfits prepared by the Madhu-Nápit are "Jalebí," "Amṛiti," "Khájá," "Chhená-peṛá," "Laḍḍú," "Gojhá," and "Shír-bhúja."

The delicacies offered to idols are "Peṛá," "Barfí," "Iláchi-dána," "Batásá," and "Sandeṣa."

The Madhu-Nápit do not cultivate the soil, but are found employed as writers, goldsmiths, grocers, cloth-merchants, and policemen.

MAITHILA BRÁHMANS.

A few families of this sept reside in Dacca, the illiterate serving in the police, the educated as Purohits to pure Hindustání castes. Their "Jajmans," or flock, consist of Bráhmans, Chhatrís, and Kurmís; occasionally of individuals belonging to the Kándú, Áhír, Kewaṭ, and Surahiyá castes; but no Maithila

Bráhman will officiate for the Dosád, Tántí, or Chamár. After remaining a few years in Bengal these Bráhmans return to their homes in Tirhút with a little money they have saved.

The ordinary surnames of the order are Ṭhákur, Miṣra, and Ojhá.

MÁLÁKÁRA, MÁLÁKÁR, MÁLÍ.

The Málákár, or maker of garlands, belongs to a clean Ṣúdra caste, and is included among the Nava-Ṣákha. The Málákárs of Bengal trace their descent from the garland-maker attached to the household of Rájah Kaṉsa of Mathurá, who, when met by Kṛishna, was asked for a chaplet of flowers, and at once gave it. On being told to fasten it with a string he, for want of any other, took off his sacred thread and tied it, on which Kṛishna most ungenerously rebuked him for his simplicity in parting with his "Poithá," and announced that for the future his caste would be a Ṣúdra one.

Like others of the higher castes, the Málákárs claim to have originally come from Mathurá, in the reign of Jahángír. They are few in number, but in every Hindu village there is at least one representative who provides daily offerings of flowers for the temples, and marriage tiaras for the village maidens.

The caste had only one gotra, the Aliman, and in the city of Dacca has two Dals, or unions, between which there is no real difference. If, however, a member of one union marries into a family belonging to the other, the marriage feast will be more expensive than if he took a bride from his own, as he must invite the members of both Dals to the ceremony. The bridal dresses must be made of red silk brought from Murshídábád, as cotton cloth is prohibited. The bride is always carried in a Pálkí, or palanquin, while the bridegroom rides on a pony, or in a Sedan chair.

A Málákár will not become a cultivator, and never works as a kitchen gardener, the gardeners of Bengal being generally Chaṇḍáls. In Dacca members of the caste keep shops for piece goods, practise medicine, act as vaccinators, and take service in temples. Their principal occupations, however, are making wreaths, fabricating artificial chaplets and toys from the pith of the Sholá (*Hedysarum lagenarium*). The garlands placed every morning before idols are collected and arranged by Málákárs, who nevertheless refuse to paint figures, this being the profession of the Gaṇaka and Rangrez.

All the tinsel decorations put on the images and their carriages are designed by Málákárs. At marriages their services are indispensable, for they prepare the crowns (Mukuṭa) worn by the bridal pair. Moreover, no bride would consider the attire complete unless her hair was adorned with a Khopajúṛá, or ornament for the hair-knot, made with leaves of the Jack tree mixed with white Bela blossoms, while at one side of it they place a rose, or some other bright flower. For the bouquet delivered on the bridal morning the Málákár expects to be paid a rupee.

The profession of a Málákár requires a considerable knowledge of flowers, for some are forbidden to be used in religious services, and others can only be exhibited before the shrines of the deities to whom they belong. Thus the "Dhatúrá" is sacred to Ṣiv; the "Aparájita" (*Clitoria ternatea*) to Kálí; the "Bákas' (*Justicia adhatoda*) to Sarasvati; and the "Aṣoka" (*Jonesia Asoca*) to Shasṭhhí. The "Javá" (*Hibiscus rosa Sinensis*) or China rose, is of most unlucky omen, and cannot be presented to idols, or employed at weddings.

Strong scented blossoms are selected for religious offerings, and these in Bengal are the "Champá" (*Michelia Champaca*), "Chambelí" (*Jasminum grandiflorum*), "Juhí" (*Jasminum auriculatum*), "Bela" (*Aegle marmelos*), "Gandhráj" (*Gardenia florida*), and the "Hársingár" (*Nyctanthes arbor-tristis*).

Chaplets offered to idols must be tied with the dried fibres of the plantain stem, not with string, and if picked and arranged by one not a Málákár they are unclean. From sixteen to twenty-four anas a month are received by the garland-maker for providing a daily supply of flowers to a temple, but as with everything else, the price of bouquets has greatly risen, and a rupee only procures about half the quantity it formerly did.

The Málákárs are all Vaishnavas in creed, and it is said none of them worship Ṣiv. The Gosáin is the Guru, while their Bráhman is common to them and to the Nava-Ṣákha.

One of the chief occupations of this caste is inoculating for small-pox, and treating individuals attacked by any eruptive fever. Hindus believe that Ṣítala, the goddess of small-pox, is one of seven sisters, who are designated Motiya, Mátariya, Pakauriya, Masúriká, Chamariya, Khudwá, and Pansá. The first four are varieties of small-pox, the names referring to the form, size, and colour of the pustules; the fifth is *Variola maligna*; the sixth is measles; and the seventh is water-pox. Every Málákár keeps images of one or more of these goddesses, and on the first of Chait (March 15th) a festival is held, and the Málákárs superintend the details. It is popularly called "Málíbágh," from the garden where the service is performed, and thither Hindus and Muhammadans repair with offerings of clotted milk, cocoa-nuts, and plantains in the hope of propitiating the dreaded sisters.

When small-pox rages, the Málákárs are busiest. As soon as the nature of the disease is determined, the Kabíráj retires, and a Málákár is summoned. His first act is to forbid the introduction of meat, and all food requiring oil or spices for its preparation. He then ties a lock of hair, a cowrie shell, a piece of turmeric, and an article of gold on the right wrist of the patient. The sick person is then laid on the "Mánjh-pattá," the young and unexpanded leaf of the plantain tree, and milk is prescribed as the sole article of food. He is fanned with a branch of the sacred Ním, and anyone entering the chamber is sprinkled with water. Should the fever become aggravated and delirium ensue, or if a child cries much and sleeps little, the Málí performs the Máta pujah. This consists in bathing the image of the goddess causing the disease, and giving a draught of the water to drink. To relieve the irritation of the skin, pease-meal, turmeric, flour, or shell-sawdust, is sprinkled over the body.

If the eruption be copious, a piece of new cloth in the figure of eight is wrapped round the chest and shoulders. On the night between the seventh and eighth days of the eruption the Málí has much to do. He places a waterpot in the sick room, and puts on it Alwá rice, a cocoa-nut, sugar, plantains, a yellow rag, flowers, and a few Ním leaves. Having mumbled several Mantras, he recites the "Qiça," or tale, of the particular goddess, which often occupies six hours.

When the pustules are mature, the Málí dips a thorn of the Karaundá (*Carissa*) in Til oil, and punctures each one. The body is then anointed with oil, and cooling fruits given. When the scabs (Dewlí) have peeled off, another ceremonial, called "Godám," is gone through. All the offerings on the waterpot are rolled in a cloth, and fastened round the waist of the patient. These offerings are the perquisite of the Málí, who also receives a fee.

These minute, and to our ideas absurd, proceedings are practised by the Hindus and Muhammadans, including the bigoted Farazí, whenever small-pox, or other eruptive fever attacks their families. Government vaccinators earn a considerable sum yearly by executing the Ṣítala worship, and when a child is vaccinated a portion of the service is performed.

MÁLO.

This caste is often designated Jálo, or Jáliya, that is, persons who use a net (Jál); or Jalwah, dwellers on the water.

The Málo, according to Buchanan, came originally from Western India, where they are still numerous. The families who observed the innovations of Vyása were called Kaibarttas, while the adherents of the old tribal customs were known as Málo. According to Menu, however, the "Jhalla" and "Malla" were the offspring of an outcast Kshatriyá.[1] Ward,[2] again, describes them as the descendants of a Mágadha, or bard, and a female Ṣúdra. Buchanan,[3] on the other hand, distinguishes the "Jhalo" from the Málo, classing the former with the Kaibartta, and connecting the latter with the Dôm and Paṭní. In Rangpúr the Málo is generally called Málo-Paṭni, while in Dacca the Málo and Jálo are synonymous terms for an impure fisher caste.

The caste Purohit is a Patit Bráhman, while the majority being Vaishnavas in creed, their Guru is a Gosáin. Though reckoned unclean, the Ṣúdra Nápit and Dhoba usually work for them. All belong to one of two gotras, Aliman and Udádhí, the members of which will eat and drink together, but never intermarry. The Udádhí gotra is chiefly found along the Lakhya and Meghna, on the outskirts of the Ballálí country, the Málos belonging to it being less deeply tinged by Hinduism than their brethren of the Aliman gotra. The only titles met with among Málos are Manjhí, Pátr, and Bepárí; while among other fisher castes no honorary distinctions exist. Under the Muhammadan government they served as boatmen, Chaprásís, mace-bearers ('Asa-bardár), and staff-bearers (Sonṭe-bardár) in processions. They were also employed in conveying treasure from Dacca to Murshídábád, while a tradition still survives that early in this century two of their number became great favourites with Nawáb Naçrat Jang, who presented them with golden spinning wheels for their wives' use. The Málos, therefore extol the golden age that has passed, and inveigh against the equality and degeneracy of the present.

Málos generally use a shorter Jalká boat than the Tíyars, but when they fish with the long Uthár net they fasten two boats stem to stern. Like the Kaibartta, the Málo is often a cultivator, and in Bhowál he has been obliged by changes in the course and depth of the rivers to relinquish his caste trade. Málos manufacture twine, but not rope, and traffic in grain, while those who have saved a little money keep grocers' shops, or become fishmongers.

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[1] Chap. x, 22.

[2] Vol. i, 140.

[3] Vol iii, 531.

The Málos observe the same close time as the Kaibarttas and Tíyars; while Khala-Kumárí is worshipped in Ṣrávan (July-August), offerings are made to Baṛa-Buṛi in fulfilment of vows, and lights are launched on the river in honour of Khwájah Khizr.

Málo women sell fish in the bazárs, but in some places this practice is considered derogatory to their gentility, and is prohibited. Money is always paid for a bride, and of late years the price has risen to one hundred rupees. The bride's father always presents his daughter with a silken, or other fine, garment. After the birth of a child a feast is given by the rich to the caste Bráhman, and offerings made at a shrine called Dháka Iṣvarí, sacred to Durgá. As is general among the unclean tribes the Ṣráddha is held on the thirtieth day after death.

MALLÁḤ.

The exact bearing to one another of the different fisher and boating tribes along the Ganges has always been a puzzle. Little information can be derived from the men themselves, for an enquiry of this nature has no interest for them, and as a rule they are neither intelligent nor communicative. Buchanan[1] enumerates five tribes under the generic term Malláḥs, namely, the Gongrhri, Suriya, Mariyari, Banpar, and Kewaṭ; Sherring distinguishes ten clans; and Mr. Beverley is doubtful whether the Banpar, Surahiyá, and Mariyárí should be considered as subordinate tribes, or as kindred to the Malláḥs.

The Arabic term for a boatman, Malláh, has undoubtedly been adopted as the name of a caste of Upper India and Bihár; but it has probably been assumed by, or given to, various fisher tribes.

In Eastern Bengal the following are frequently met with:—

Surahiyá,
Muriárí,
Banpar,
Kewaṭ,
Tíyar,
Guṛiya,
Gonṛhí,
Cháín.

Small colonies of these tribes are scattered throughout the Eastern districts; but it is as traders, bringing the produce of Bihár and Tirhut to Dacca, and other Bengal cities, that they are chiefly known.

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[1] I, 172.

All Hindustání boatmen are, as they say, descended from one Nikhád, or Nishád, who ferried Ráma-Chandra across the Ganges at Allahábád; but there is little doubt that all are of aboriginal descent, and not of pure Hindu blood. If we enquire what are the religious rites performed by them, we find that ceremonials more aboriginal than Hindu predominate. The majority of Malláḥs belong to the Pánch Píriya creed, an excrescence of Muhammadanism, and worshippers of a water god, called Koila-Bábá, described as an old grey-bearded person like Father Neptune, who, as "Ganga Jí ká Beldár," saps and swallows up whatever opposes the sacred stream. Before casting a new net, or starting on a commercial venture, offerings of molasses, and seven kinds of grain, kneaded into balls, are offered to him, and at the end of the ceremony one of the balls is placed on the edge of the water, another on the bow of the boat.[1]

Another rite common to many, if not to all, fisher races is the Bárwaria or Bárahí Pújah, when a subscription is made, and in the absence of a Bráhman, a swine is sacrificed on a plain or in a garden.

There is a much closer connection between certain of these tribes than others. Thus the Cháín and Surahiyá are more social and more nearly on an equality than, for instance, the Cháín and Banpar, and, as among the Ṣúdra castes, while one is considered clean, another is pronounced unclean. With our present imperfect knowledge of these tribes we cannot account for such capricious distinctions, but the causes were probably the same as those now creating divisions among recognised Hindu castes.

All Hindustání boatmen call themselves Chaudharís; but Bengalis have one contemptuous phrase, Manṛuá-bádí,[2] or Manṛuá eaters, for all foreigners from Upper India. He would, however, be a rash man who used this epithet in their hearing, for it is the one term of abuse most warmly resented.

The custom with all Hindustání boatmen engaged in trade, is for the net profits to be divided into shares of which the Mánjhí, or shipper, receives one-third, the crew two-thirds.

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[1] This ceremony is called by them Deothán; see Elliot's "Supplementary Glossary," i, 245.

[2] Manṛuá is the Eleusine Corocana, the Rágí, of the coast Muhammadans, one of the most productive of grains.

MURIÁRÍ, MARIYÁRI.

Buchanan was of opinion that this tribe of boatmen belonged to an aboriginal race from the upper valley of the Ganges. Other authorities, however, connect them with the Kewaṭ.

The number and wealth of the Muriárí in Bhágalpúr have raised them to the rank of pure Ṣúdras; but in Purneah and Eastern Bengal impurity is attributed to them. The invariable reply given to enquiries relating to their history and origin is that their progenitor was a certain Kál Dás, who came from the south country.

The Muriárí are very numerous in Arrah, being engaged as ferrymen, boatmen, and fishermen, but refusing to carry Palkis, or become peasants. Many large boats manned by them arrive at the Váruṇí fair in November, laden with pulse and other vegetable products.

The majority of the Muriárí belong to the Pánch Píriya creed; and it is reported that widow marriages are still practised among them.

NÁPIT, NÁPITA, NÁÍ.

The barber of Bengal differs in no respect from the barber of Europe. He is the same character now as he was when Maenas brought the first barber to Rome to shave the famous Scipio Africanus, and although he does not possess in India a shop where idlers lounge, and the plethoric are bled, he still retains the reputation of being loquacious, a retailer of scandal, and with an unusual amount of insight into character. Above all, he is a man of the world, full of anecdote and repartee, and, if rumour is to be believed, he arranges meetings between disconsolate lovers. Furthermore, he is very clannish, and an insult received by one is resented by the whole body, while melancholy indeed is the fate of a Hindu who offends his barber; the whole clan will refuse to shave him, and at last, driven to desperation, he is glad, by the payment of an exorbitant fee, to be restored to their good graces.

In Dacca, the Nápit is a clean Ṣúdra, condescending to shave Europeans and Muhammadans, but declining to draw his razor over the chin of the Chaṇḍál, Bhúinmálí, or such like impure beings. He will shave a Sáha, but will not pare his nails, and will not attend at the weddings of any but the clean Ṣúdras.

In Eastern Bengal the Nápits are all included in three gotras:—

Aliman, Kaṣyapa, Madhu-Kulyá.

Seel is a title common to every member, but the polite term to address them by is "Nara-sundar." Many, who practise medicine, call themselves "Baidyá."

Nápits are generally Vaishnavas in creed, but a few worship Ṣiv. They have no hereditary leader, but boast of very powerful unions, and a Pancháít.

In every village there is a barber, and the situation often descends from father to son. In large towns they work independently, and there is no regulation against their following their occupation wherever they like. As a rule, the working classes only shave every eight days, but the higher ranks do so every four, sometimes every second day. In shaving every four days, eight anas a month is usually charged, and for a single shave one paisa, which also includes the charge for ear cleaning, nail paring, shampooing, and cracking each joint of the body. In the houses of the rich the barbership is often a hereditary post, as is that of the Purohit, Dhobá, and Dáí, while he, as well as they, have free access to all parts of the house during the day. The barber pares the nails of Hindu females as well as males, and his presence is required at all domestic occurrences. The day a child is born he pares the mother's nails, and returns on the ninth and thirtieth days to repeat the operation. At the houses of Muhammadans he is only present on the sixth day, the Chhaṭhí. For these services he is given pulse, rice, oil, salt, turmeric, and two paisa, the rich generally adding a piece of cloth and a rupee.

Yet, strange to say, the Nápit also assumes a religious character at weddings, and no marriage is properly performed without him. While the bride and bridegroom are seated within the "Marocha," he approaches, and repeats what is called "Gaura Váchana," a story about the marriage of Ṣiv and Párvatí, having for its moral the duty of submitting to one another, and of bearing with each other's infirmities of temper.

In addition to all these vocations, the barber, like his European namesake of the seventeenth century, practises surgery, opening boils and abscesses, and prescribing in all forms of venereal disease. A considerable number of the native physicians belong to this class, and many of the inoculators of small-pox. When a member of the Nápit caste wishes to study medicine, he is associated with a Kabíráj, who is then called "Adhyápaka," or tutor. The pupil is not bound as an apprentice, but he must obey his master as implicitly as the disciple his Guru. He compounds salves and simples, and daily receives instruction from his teacher. The Nápits, who practise inoculation, are generally most reckless, spreading the disease without the slightest consideration for the unprotected. They possess a text book, "Vasanta-ṭiká," but few study it.

Nápits have the reputation of being thrifty and very acute, and many, plying their trade in Dacca, hold land in Tipperah, which is sublet to others. Every year they visit their homes, carrying thither their savings, and at leisure arranging all affairs for the ensuing year. Those who practise medicine often amass considerable wealth, becoming respected members of village society.

Barbers never cultivate the soil, or fish for a livelihood, and will not take service as domestic servants in the houses of the low caste or European, as the Hindustání Hajjám does. At the present day Nápits are to be met with on the bench, and they also serve as Mukhtárs, Wakíls (attorneys), policemen, and watchmen.

The Nápit is often an exorciser of devils; and if the newly born child has convulsions, or Trismus, he is called in, and performs the "Jháṛna-phunkná" deception, which consists in making passes with a Ním branch, while a Mantra, or invocation, is repeated without drawing breath.

The Nápitní, or female barber, has no occupation in Bengal, as she has in Upper India.

No respectable Hindu female ever cuts her hair, except when she dedicates it as a votive offering to a deity, in the hope of curing her child of a dangerous malady. The hair in such cases is cut off and hung on a Ním, or Bat tree. There is a considerable traffic in hair between Calcutta and the eastern shores of the Bay of Bengal. A Mag considers that his good looks in a great measure depend on the size and shape of his top-knot, so, like the females of more civilized races, he braids false tresses with his own. It is generally said, but perhaps by libellers, that the poorer Muhammadan women part with their hair for a consideration.

NAṚ, NAṬA, NARTAKA, NÁṬAKA.

There is little doubt that the Naṛ, or Naṭa, of Bengal, are identical with the Kathak of Hindustán, and a tradition survives that the caste first came to Dacca in the days of the Nawábs, and received the name of Naṭa from the Sanskrit for a dancer;

but it is also said that originally they were the same as the Naḍa who manufacture lac bracelets. Ward mentions that in his day none of the caste were to be found in Bengal, and that the Bráhmans traced their descent from a Málákár and a female Ṣúdra. The modern Naṭas, not satisfied with this pedigree, claim to be the offspring of Bharadvája Muní and a dancing girl, and assert that the Gaṇak Bráhmans are sprung from a son of the same holy man. In Hindustán[1] the Kathaks still wear the Bráhmanical cord, and confer their "Áṣír-bád," or benediction, on Ṣúdras, but in Bengal the Naṛs no longer do so, as the original settlers, being few in number, were obliged to take wives from mean castes, and became degraded. Although the Naṛ caste requires to support a Bráhman of its own, the Ṣúdra Nápit and Dhobá work for it. The Naṛs have one gotra, the Bharadvája, and their patronymics are Nandí and Bhakta, by which latter title the caste is sometimes known, but whenever an individual excels in music he is dignified by the title Ustád.

When young, the Naṛ boys are taught dancing, being known as Bhagtiyás; but on reaching manhood they become musicians, or Sapardá, and attend on dancing girls (Báí), who are usually Muhammadans. In former days, no Hindu girls ever danced in public, although dancers among the Bází-gír, and other vagrant tribes, were common, but at present Boistubís, and Hindu prostitutes, are often professional "Nách" girls. There has been a tendency within the last thirty years for the Naṛ caste to separate into two classes, one teaching boys to dance and playing to them, the other attending the Muhammadan Báí. The latter are the better paid, and more skilful musicians, and a band (Sapardáí) accompanying a popular dancing girl often earn as much as twenty rupees a night, while the former consider they are well paid if they get five rupees for one night's amusement. The musical instruments generally used by the Naṛs are the "Sárangí," or fiddle, the "Tablá," or drum, and the "Manjírá," or cymbals. Naṛs treat their instruments with great veneration, and always, on first rising in the morning, make obeisance before them. On the Ṣrí Panchamí, in Mágh, sacred to Sarasvatí, a Naṛ will not play a note until the worship of the goddess is finished.

Like the Ṛishí women, the Naṛ will not play, sing, or dance in public, although at marriages of their own people they still do so.

It is currently believed that many Naṛs have of late years become Muhammadans, but this accusation is denied by the caste. It is nevertheless true that when a Sapardá falls in love with a dancing girl his only chance of marrying her is by becoming a Muhammadan.

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[1] In Oudh the Kathaks call themselves Bráhmans, and their pedigree is traced from a Chhatrí father and a Bais, or Rájput, mother. They intermarry with kinsmen, called Kirtannia (S. Kirtiyá, a dancer) and Bhagatoá (Bhagtiyá). "Notes on the Races, &c., of Avadh," by P. Carnegy. App. B. 91.

A large proportion of the Dacca Naṛs inhabit an old Saráe, or caravansary, called Bhagtiyá Kaṭrá, built in the seventeenth century by an eunuch named Khwájah 'Ambar.

Many other settlements of this caste are met with in the interior, differing in several respects from the city families. For instance, the Naṛs of Bikrampúr affect the manners of a high-born race, tracing their descent from no earthly parent, but from a Naṭa of Indra's heaven, banished for some delinquency, and degraded to the lowest rank of Hindu society. Like other Ṣúdras, these Naṛs celebrate the Ṣráddha on the thirtieth day, are generally Vaishnavas in creed, and have a Patit Bráhman to officiate to them. They decline to play in the houses of the Chaṇḍáls, Bhúinmálís, and other low castes, and, as their services are no longer required, have ceased to perform before Muhammadans. At weddings the Bikrampúr Naṛs play on the "Behlá" (fiddle), "Naqárah" (drum), and "Kása" (a variety of fiddle). If he has no ear for music the Naṛ becomes a cultivator or a shopkeeper, without any loss of respectability. The Hindu Naṛ occupies a position corresponding to that of the Muhammadan Bájunia, but the former is more sought after, as no Hindu will have a Muhammadan musician in his house if he can possibly avoid it.

At Gopínáthpúr, in the east of the Dacca district, there is a settlement of the caste, celebrated as "Ḍholiyas," or drummers, who are in great request at marriages and religious ceremonies, The "Ḍhol" is an instrument of unwieldy dimensions, and, hanging in front, is beaten with the right hand, and with a stick held in the left.

All Bengali singers use a musical treatise, called "Rágamálá," written in the vernacular with the "Rága" and "Rágiṇí" of each song marked. The words are Hindustání, and are generally composed by masters residing in Lucknow, Allahábád, or Benares; but of late years Bengali gentlemen have shown a preference for songs written in their own language. Skilled professional singers, both men and women, learn to improvise, and execute variations (Tán[1]) while singing; and, on becoming adepts, a special musician playing on a "Tán-púrá," or instrument of four strings, accompanies them.

Native singers maintain that Gánjha ruins the voice; but that a drink composed of rice-water, sugar-candy, and black pepper improves and strengthens it. With few exceptions all dancing girls smoke Gánjha to excess.

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[1] Sanskrit, "Tána," a tone, keynote.

Throughout Eastern Bengal the most popular performers are undoubtedly the Kabí-wálí, or Jhumar, who chaunts ribald songs extempore, and the Kemta wálí, usually a Hindu Kasbín, whose dancing is as lascivious as that of the Kahrúá, or fandango, dancer of Upper India. During the annual holidays sacred to Durgá, incredible sums are paid to these performers, and celebrated artistes are sought for throughout India by the agents of the rich landholders.

Besides these various classes of musicians, dancers, and singers, the city of Dacca is enlivened on all occasions of festivity by bands of music. Enterprising Muhammadans, facetiously called "Majors," buy cracked wind instruments, threadbare red coats, and old shakos, which may have figured at Plassey, and allot them to individuals, often Farangís, whose only qualification is having sound lungs. These bands head all processions, and afford great pleasure to the populace, although the music to European ears is of the most horrid and discordant character.[1]

NÚNIYÁ.

A few members of this Bihár caste come to Dacca in search of employment, and are remarkable for their well-proportioned figures, and handsome features. Mr. Magrath regards them as a Hinduized offshoot of the Bhúiyas; but other authorities link them with the Binds and Beldárs. Like the Kurmí, the Núniyás maintain a peculiar and ill-defined relationship with higher castes, a relationship rendered the more inexplicable by their present low position in the social scale.

In Bengal Núniyás readily obtain service with Goálas, or other clean Ṣúdras, but refuse to work as labourers or domestic servants with low caste families.

PÁCHAK, PÁCHAKA.

In Dacca there is only one Páchak, or preparer of digestive pills, and he is a Chhatrí from Delhi. All castes of Hindus, from the Bráhman to the Chaṇḍál, patronize his shop, swallowing his pills whenever fancy, or expediency, prompts them. The popular digestive pill, called "Battísa," is composed of "thirty-two" ingredients, the chief being the seven kinds of salt,[1] to which senna, various myrobalans, and pepper are added. The Páchak, however, is also skilful in preparing preserves, such as pickles of limes, olives, mangoes, dates, young bamboo shoots, and the fruit of the "Ámlá" tree (*Phyllanthus emblica*), as well as salted limes (Nimbu-ka-járaka) and "Chaṭnís" of endless variety.

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[1] On Bengali music a most interesting paper, by Mr. C. B. Clark, is contained in the "Calcutta Review" for April, 1874.

Oil pickle is another preserve extensively used by Muhammadans. A Mango being split into two, the stone is removed, and the cavity filled with the seeds of "Methí," or fenugreek, anise, "Kála-jírá" (*Nigella Indica*), and chillies. The two halves pressed together are then put into a jar of mustard oil, and eaten as a condiment.

PARÁṢARA DÁS.

The Paráṣara Dás is undoubtedly a branch of the Kaibartta class; but the highly respected and prosperous native gentlemen belonging to it repudiate this base origin, claiming from certain passages in the portion of the Padma Puráṇa, called Brahma Khaṇḍa, and in the Vṛihad Vyása Sangíta, to be descended from a Khatrí father and a Vaiṣya mother, and, therefore, entitled to equal rank with the Baidyá and Káyath. This pretension, however, is not acknowledged by the latter, who treat them as they do the Kaibarttas, as people with whom no social communion can be held.

The Paráṣara Dás are also known as Halik Kaibarttas, and Sparsha[2] Dás, a name indicating that they are not impure to the "touch." The Sikdárs, or poorer members, are cultivators, being identical with the Chásá Kaibarttas of Burdwan.

The majority of the Paráṣara Dás of Dacca are writers, traders, and factors. The ordinary titles are Maulik, Ráí, Chaudharí, Biṣwas, Sirkár, and Majumdár, the two first being assumed by the higher, or Kulin, families, the rest by the Mahápaṭr or Sikdár orders. By paying a marriage fee not exceeding three hundred rupees, a Sikdár may marry into a Ḳulin family, but this system of purchasing social advancement is discountenanced by the aristocratic families.

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[1] The seven salts are "Pángá," sea salt; "Kálá-namak," impure rock-salt; "Sendhá," rock-salt; "Khár," impure carbonate of soda; "Sámbhar," from the lake near Ajmír; "Láhorí," from the city of that name, and "Chiṛ-Chiṛá," or ashes of the *Achyranthes aspera*.

[2] This may be merely a vulgar pronunciation of Paráṣara, or from Sparṣa, touching.

In the western parts of the Dacca district the clean Ṣúdras drink from the water vessels of the Paráṣara Dás,[1] although they will not touch those of the Kaibarttas. In Silhet, where the caste is most numerous and influential, the same arbitrary distinction is observed.

In Silhet the caste has not attained to the high and genteel position of their Dacca brethren, but many are still labourers who come to Dacca, and set up as stonecutters, but return and spend their savings at their homes. Stone in blocks is brought from Patna, Mungír, and Mirzápúr, and with chisels the Paráṣara Dás make grindstones, currystones, and "Fíl-páyas," or stands for tables and bedsteads. In Silhet they will not cultivate land themselves, but assume to be pure Ṣúdras, descended from Vyása, the son of the Muní Paráṣara, and a Kaibartta damsel, and consequently entitled to the appellation of Vyásakta, which is adopted by all.

Wherever found, the Paráṣara Dás have the Ṣúdra Nápit and Dhobá working for them, but the Purohit is distinct, although it is maliciously asserted by natives that the Bhúinmálí Bráhman officiates for them.

The majority of the caste are strict followers of the Kṛishna Mantra, observing all the popular Ṣúdra festivals, but they are unusually scrupulous regarding cooked food; for instance, the flesh of kids is prohibited from being prepared in their own houses, and rice cannot be boiled in the same pan as meat.

PÁSÍ.[2]

A few representatives of this semi-Hinduised aboriginal race are to be met with in Dacca, working at all trades, but generally as porters, coolies, or servants to low caste shopkeepers. In Bengal the owners of the toddy and date palms either extract the juice themselves, or employ Bhúinmálís to do so, and shops for the sale of spirituous liquors are usually owned by Súṇrís, or outcast Ṣúdras. The Pásí is therefore unable to prosecute his ordinary occupation, and is only driven by sheer necessity to leave his home and seek employment at a distance.

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[1] In some parts of Dacca this respectable caste is in derision called "Gábar Dás," from S. Garbha Dása, a slave by birth.

[2] From Sanskrit, Páṣa, a noose, or cord.

The extraction of the juice of the "Tál," or Palmyra palm, as well as that of the Khajúr, or date palm, is a most important operation in Eastern Bengal. The Tál trees are tapped from March to May; the date palms in the cold season.

The juice of the former, or toddy (Táṛí), is used in the manufacture of bread, and as an intoxicating liquor by adding sugar and grains of rice. Hindustání drunkards often add Dhatúrá to increase its intoxicating properties. In Dacca a "Tál" grove is usually rented, and on an average twelve anas a tree are obtained. The quantity of juice extracted varies from an average of five to ten pounds. When fresh this sells for two anas a *ser*, but if a day old for only one ana.

Date palm "Táṛí" is rarely drunk, being popularly believed to cause rheumatism, but is extensively used in preparing sugar. A date palm is generally leased for seven anas a year.

PÁṬIAL.

This is a branch of one of the Navaṣákha castes, probably of the Káyath, as the family names are identical with those of its lower divisions, but it is regarded as impure.

The sole occupation of this caste is the manufacture of mats, and they deny that they ever cultivate the soil with their own hands. The mats, coarse, dark-coloured, and thick, are called Moṭá-páṭí, to distinguish them from the finer kinds made at Silhet known as Ṣítal-páṭí. The only plant cultivated for mat-making is the "Mathara"[1] (*Maranta dichotoma*), which grows luxuriantly in the low, marshy parts of Bikrampúr, around the houses of the peasantry. It flowers in June and July, and, while still green, is cut down about the middle of September, the stems being divided into slips are hung from the rafters, and when required for use steeped in water.

Among the Silhet Páṭials women make the mats; consequently the money value of a girl who is a skilful workwoman is considerable, and a father receives from three to five hundred rupees when his daughter marries. In Dacca, on the other hand, men are the sole workers.

Although chiefly found in Bikrampúr, the Paṭials are scattered throughout Eastern Bengal, wherever the nature of the soil admits of the cultivation of the Maranta. The caste is exclusively Vaishnava, and the headman is known as the Pradhán, or Mu'tabar.

The only other caste that makes mats is the Doí, or Páṭia Dás.

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[1] Or Mátula, Bengal hemp.

PAṬNÍ, PÁṬÚNÍ, PÁṬAUNÍ.

This is one of the utterly vile castes of Bengal, living in the outskirts of villages near rivers, where their neat and tidy hovels always attract attention. They are very reserved and uncommunicative, but there can be little doubt they were originally Ḍôms. In Rangpúr, and throughout the valley of the Brahmaputra, they are still designated Ḍôm-Paṭní, and in Bengal this is applied to them as a term of abuse. Their other titles are Gangáputra, Gháṭ-mánjhí, or simply Mánjhí.

According to some authorities they are descended from a Rajaka, or washerman, and a woman of the Vaíşya caste. Paṭnís, however, claim to be the offspring of Mádhava, who ferried Rámá across a river on his way from Ayodhyá to Mithila, and relate how Mádhava, having witnessed the resuscitation of Ahalyá, was afraid to transport the god to the other bank until he had extracted the promise that Rámá would sit on the gunwale with his feet in the water. The simplicity of this ferryman was extraordinary. When Rámá landed, Mádhava complained that the colour of the boat had been changed to a hideous yellow, and that he was ruined. The reply was that the ferry-boat had been converted into pure gold, and as a punishment for his stupidity Rámá announced that his sons would always be ferrymen, and that he should, after death, become the ferryman of the Vaitaraṇi, or Hindu Styx.

Another fiction in the history of the Paṭnís pertains to the reign of Ballál Sen. The monarch became enamoured of a ferryman's daughter, named Padma-vatí, and married her. At the feast "Pákaşparşa," when the bride cooks, and the bridegroom for the first time eats from her hands, the Paṭnís, with inborn obtuseness, and to the great grief of the queen, presented themselves at the end of the festival. For this misconduct they were degraded, and enrolled among the Nícha, or low castes.

The Paṭnís are chiefly massed in Eastern Bengal, there being as many as 41,855 in Silhet, 21,726 in Mymensingh, 19,691 in Kachar, 6,305 in Tipperah, and 4,695 in Dacca. Their aggregate number in Bengal is 127,636, of whom 102,728, or 80 per cent., are returned as residents of the nine eastern districts.

The Paṭní is peculiar to Bengal, the Gháṭwál, or ferryman, of Hindustán, being usually one of the Malláh caste. Besides acting as a ferryman the Paṭní often trades, or keeps a grocer's shop, but he neither fishes nor cultivates the soil in the Bikrampúr part of Dacca, although in the north he is generally a peasant. Many still breed swine, but never admit doing so. The Paṭní caulks boats, and is very expert at manufacturing sieves and baskets of ratan.

In Silhet the Paṭní caste has four subdivisions, having no fellowship with each other:—

1. Ját Paṭní, who are cultivators, and "Modís," or grocers.
2. Balamí, or Ghát̤ Paṭní, are ferrymen.
3. Naqárchí are musicians.
4. Machhwá are fishermen.

The caste Bráhman is a Patit, who generally assumes a pompous title, such as Chakravartí. The barber and washerman are always members of their own caste, as the Ṣúdra workmen refuse to act for them. The Ṣráddha is celebrated after thirty days, and wives are impure for one month after childbirth.

The chief festival is the Ganga Pújah, and Paṭnís never enter upon the work of a ferry without first of all sacrificing a white kid to the river goddess. They also propitiate Pavana, the Hindu Aeolus, with offerings of salt, sugar, milk, and Gánjha. The majority worship Ṣiv, eating flesh and drinking spirits, but a few Vaishnavas are to be met with.

Like most Hindu boatmen, on embarking, or when overtaken by a storm, they utter the following invocation:—

"Sar Ganga, daryá, Pánch Pír, Badr, rakhya Káro."

A Muhammadan boatman, under similar circumstances, shouts—

"Allah, Nabí, Ghazí Sáhib, Pánch Pír, Badr, rakhya Káro."

Paṭnís generally combine and farm a ferry for one of their number, exhibiting the same remarkable reliance on each other's honesty as is displayed by other natives when lending money.

All Paṭnís belong to an Aliman gotra, and the headman is styled Pradhán, or Parámánik. Widow marriage is not observed nowadays; and in many other social matters they affect the manners of the Ṣúdras. For example, they will caulk a boat, but it would be derogatory to paint it, and they freely indulge in intoxicating liquors, although it is sinful to own to it.

The Paṭní is usually a short, squat, and very muscular man. His nose is snub, with the nostrils expanded, and being, like other non-Aryan tribes, very fond of coloured turbans and ornamented jackets, his appearance is striking and peculiar.

RANGÁ-WÁLAH.

Pewterers belong to any caste, but are usually degraded Goálas, or Sonár-baniks. Four or five families, who live by melting pewter bars brought from Calcutta, hire workmen before the Durgá Pújah festival to assist in adorning the grotesque images of the goddess. The pewter is put into an open pan, and when melted a ladle full is taken out and thrown on a stone slab. When cool, the Rángá-wálah presses the soft metal between boards of jack-wood, and works out the pattern with an awl and a sandal wood puncheon.

The pith ornaments, supplied by the Málákár for the figure of Durgá, are decorated by this workman, and a complete set is sold in boxes to villagers for from two to twenty rupees.

The Rángá-wálah stains his tinsel with three colours, red, green, and yellow. The red, or "Gulalí," is procured from the Gandha-banik, and mixed with Garjan oil before being used; the green is made with verdigris (Zangár) and Garjan oil; and the yellow is merely a paste of lac and turmeric.

RÁUT, RÁWAT.

This, the most numerous class of Mihtars in Eastern Bengal, are generally known as Ḍoriyá, or dog-keepers. By their own account two subdivisions of the family are recognised, namely, those residing on the north, and those settled to the south of the river Karma-náṣa, neither of whom will intermarry, or associate with the other. The former, also called Tirhutia Ráuts, are degraded by manufacturing brooms and baskets, like the Ḍôms. Both Hindu and Mussulmán Ráuts are found in Eastern Bengal, but the latter never circumcise their children, and after death are not allowed to lie in the public graveyard. The Ráut, though despised by the people around, looks down on the Sáha and Bhúinmálí as still more degraded.

Ráuts are employed as sweepers in private houses, and look after the dogs and cats of the household, a duty occasionally discharged by the Lálbegí. Like the Helas, who are often identified with the Ráuts, they refuse to touch food brought from the European table, or handle the carcass of any dead animal, as is done by the Lálbegí, Ḍôm, and Bhúinmálí. At the caste Pancháít every member must attend, but those assuming Muhammadan customs abstain from touching the pork and spirits partaken of by their so-called Hindu brethren. In Hindustán the Ráut cultivates the soil, in Eastern Bengal he never does.

Their marriage ceremonies resemble those of low Ṣúdras; but on the wedding day the bridegroom rides, while the bride walks.

Ráuts worship many Hindu deities, but the principal festival is in Ṣrávan (July-August), when they proceed to the jungle, carrying a young pig, which is sacrificed to Deví, or Bandí Deví, the favourite divinity of low caste Hindus.

When a Ráut dies, the body is wrapped in a clean white sheet, and the mourners on the way to the grave keep shouting "Rám! Rám! Sat hai!" "O Ram, it is true!" On their return to the house of mourning each one drinks a little sweet sharbat, after which spirits are passed round, and the company disperses. On the following morning the name of the deceased is inscribed on a leaf and steeped in milk, which is then poured on the ground. After seven days the Sátwíni Pújah, or Ghusl, is observed, on which occasion all the relatives proceed to the river and bathe. The meals are cooked in the house, but not until ten days have expired can any of the inmates shave. A feast, known as the "Daṣamí Kriyá," is then celebrated, at which, all the men being shaved and dressed in their holiday attire, copious draughts of spirits are drunk. On the first anniversary of the death a similar feast is kept.

ṚISHI.

Ṛishí and Mochí are synonyms of the same caste, but the members repudiate the name of Chamár. There can be no doubt, however, that they belong to the same race, although long residence in Bengal has altered them in several respects.

Buchanan met with a tribe of fishermen in Puraniyá called Rishi, and he was of opinion that they were originally an aboriginal tribe of Mithilá. Rishi, however, is often used as a pseudonym to hide the real paternity of a caste, thus the Múshahar Dôm often calls himself "Ṛishi-bálaka," or son of a Rishi, and the Bengali Chamár tries to pass incognito as a Ṛishi.

In the census returns of 1872, Ṛishis are enrolled as Chamárs, or Mochís, among the semi-Hinduized aborigines. In Bengal they number 393,490 persons, and are chiefly met with in the twenty-four Pergunnahs, Burdwan, Nadiyá, and Jessore, while in Dacca 24,063 are returned.

The origin of the Ṛishi caste is given in the following legend, related by a Bráhman of theirs.

One of the Prajá-pati, or mind-born sons of Bráhma, was in the habit of providing the flesh of cows and clarified butter, as a burnt offering (Áhuti) to the gods. It was then the custom to eat a portion of the sacrifice, restore the victim to life, and drive it into the forest. On one occasion the Prajá-pati, whose wife was pregnant, failed to resuscitate the sacrificial animal, she having clandestinely made away with a portion. Alarmed at this, he summoned all the other Prajá-patís, and they sought by divination to discover the cause of the failure. At last they ascertained what had occurred, and as a punishment the wife was cursed, and expelled from their society. The child which she bore was the first Mochí, or tanner, and mankind having lost the power of reanimating cattle slaughtered for food, the good ceased to kill them.

A Bráhman was bestowed on the Ṛishis by Ballál Sen, and the story goes that in the palace of that monarch there was a Bráhman, who having made himself especially disagreeable by insisting upon being appointed to one of the newly formed castes, had it intimated to him by the Rájah that he would belong to the caste which should first appear to him in the morning. There was also a Ṛishi, a celebrated player on the Naqárah, or kettledrum, whose duty it was to sound the *réveille*. It was easily arranged that the Bráhman should first cast his eyes on him when he awoke, and his descendants have ever since ministered to this despised race.

The Ṛishis of Dacca can give no other history of themselves. In the city they occupy about 450 houses, and in several parts of the district large settlements are found. The subdivisions are numerous, varying in different parts of the country. In Bikrampúr they have separated into three septs:—

1. Ṛishi, musicians and basket makers.
2. Chamár, tanners.
3. Baitál, shoemakers and curriers.

In other quarters, however, they are divided into Baṛá-bhágiya and Chhoṭá-bhágiya, the latter being chiefly found in Bhowál cultivating the soil, and acting as musicians. It is remarkable that they observe the Ṣráddha on the eleventh day as the Chaṇḍáls do, and abstain from skinning the carcasses of their own cattle.

The only gotra is Ṣáṇḍilya, while Ṛishi is the general title of the caste; but a few, descended from servants of the Nawábs, who received rent-free lands, still style themselves Chaudharís. They have no Dals, or trades unions, but they possess a Pancháít, and a president addressed Parámánik, or Moiáli.[1] Nine-tenths of the caste worship Ṣiv, but imitate the Ṣúdras in most of their religious ceremonies, while others, peculiar to themselves, resemble those of the Chamárs. Though utterly vile, they are permitted to make offerings at the shrines of Kálí, which a Jogí is not allowed to do. They keep many Hindu festivals, the chief being that in honour of Viṣva-Karma, on the last day of Bhádra. When smallpox prevails, they offer a pig to Ṣítala, first of all smearing the snout with red lead, and repeating certain incantations, after which it is set free, and anyone can seize it.

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[1] Perhaps the Arabic Muwálí, one who assists.

Like the Chamár, Dhobá, Dosád, and other low castes, the Ṛishi observe the Jalka Deví worship whenever cholera or other epidemic disease breaks out. The Ṛishi women, however, only collect contributions in their own quarter of the city, and wear the wreath of plantain, date palm, or Bena[1] (*Andropogon muricatus*) leaves, for two and a half days, instead of six, as among the Chamárs.

Ṛishis burn their dead, but no religious ceremony is performed at the pyre. On the fourth, tenth, and thirtieth day after death, the Purohit offers "Piṇḍa" to the manes of the deceased.

Men and women are impure for thirty days after a birth or death.

A father generally receives from fifty to sixty rupees for his daughter. The bride is dressed in red garments, and, if rich, rides, but if poor, walks, to the bridegroom's house. Widows still marry, but the offspring of a "Sagáí" marriage is degraded, and the sons have to pay a heavy fine before they can obtain wives. The Levirate marriage is unknown at the present day.

Ṛishis will not touch beef as the Chamárs do, but they are very partial to chickens, and regard pork as a delicacy. Like the Chamárs they are notorious spirit drinkers and Gánjha smokers.

The female Ṛishi differs from the Chamáín in never acting as a midwife, in wearing shell bracelets instead of huge ones of bell-metal, and in never appearing as a professional singer.

Ṛishis work as tanners, shoemakers, saddlers, musicians, and basket makers. They tan hides like the Chamárs, but the only ones they will cure are those of the cow, goat, buffalo, and deer. Their mode of preparing skins is as follows:—The raw hide is rubbed, and then soaked for fifteen to twenty days in a strong solution of lime. It is then deprived of its hair and of any fat that remains, and steeped for six days in acid tamarind juice. Finally, it is put in a vat containing a solution of lac and pounded "Babúl" (*Acacia*), "Garan" (*Ceriops Roxburghianus*), and "Sundarí" (*Heritiera minor*) barks, the hide being after this immersion regarded as properly cured.

The town Ṛishis buy hides from their brethren resident in those parts of the country where cattle abound. The village

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[1] "Bená," in Bengali, "Viraṇa" and "Víra-taram" in Sanskrit, are the names of the plant, "Khas-Khas" the Persian for the fibrous roots.

Ṛishis every morning row up and down the rivers in their neighbourhood in search of carcasses, and when epidemic diseases attack the herds, they find so much to do, that the villagers attribute the spread of the disease to them. It is, doubtless, often the case that they puncture a healthy cow with an Acacia thorn impregnated with virus, but they are rarely, if ever, detected at this villainous trade. The people, however, firmly believe that they do act in this way.

The Ṛishi will not touch a corpse, but will skin the carcass of a dead animal. The skin of the buffalo, sacrificed at the Durgá Pújah, is their perquisite, and the skinning of the animal often gives rise to bitter quarrels between rival families.

The Ṛishis make shoes, but of inferior quality to those manufactured by the Chamárs; also, famous baskets with rattan (*Calamus rotang*), from which they derive one of their popular names, "Bet-Mochí," the natives asserting that the baskets are so closely woven that they will hold water. They also collect the roots of the "Dub" grass (*Panicum*), and manufacture the brush (Manjan) used by weavers for starching the warp. In some parts, the Ṛishi castrates bull calves, but this they stoutly deny.

The caste has barbers and washermen who are Ṛishis, and in the city the Hindustání, or Khoṇṭá Bráhman, officiates for them. Illegitimate children are usually brought up to be barbers, or washermen, and wherever the community is a large one no inconvenience is felt.

The Ṭabla-wálah, or drum maker, is always a Ṛishi. Goats' skins are used for the covering, while cows' hides supply the strings for tightening the parchment. On every native drum, at one or both ends, black circles (Khiran) are painted to improve the pitch. The Ṛishi prepares a paste of iron filings and rice, with which he stains the parchment. At all Hindu weddings the Ṛishis are employed as musicians, and engaged in bands, as among Muhammadans. Their favourite instruments are drums of various shapes and sizes, the violin, and the pipe.

In former years, the marriage ceremonies of the Ṛishi were scenes of debauchery and intemperance, but of late intoxicating liquors have been prohibited until all the regular forms have been observed. Even Hindus, who rarely have anything favourable to say of the Ṛishi, confess that nowadays, owing to some unknown cause, both the Chamárs and Ṛishís have become more temperate and more attentive to their religious duties than formerly.

SÁNKHÁRÍ, ṢANKHA-KÁRA.

The shell-cutter is one of the most homogeneous of Bengali castes, and Dacca has always been famous for shell bracelets manufactured by the resident Sánkhárís. In the whole of Bengal the caste only numbers 11,453 persons, while in the nine eastern districts it embraces 2,735, of whom 1,157 reside in Báqirganj, and 853 in Dacca.

A tradition survives that they orginally came to Eastern Bengal with Ballál Sen, and at the palace of that monarch in Bikrampúr the site of a Sánkhárí Bázár is still shown. When the Muhammadan seat of Government was transferred to Dacca early in the seventeenth century, the shell-cutters were induced to leave their old settlement by the offer of rent-free land in the new city. The Bázár where they now reside has been their headquarters for more than two centuries and a half, but owing to the small size of the rent-free grant, they adopted a very peculiar style of architecture, building two-storied houses with a frontage of six feet and a depth of at least thirty. At the time of the permanent settlement in 1793, the Sánkhárís, being unable to show authentic title deeds, were obliged to pay ground rent like others of their fellow citizens.

The Sánkhárí caste is generally met with in the city; the few residing in the country do not saw shells, but buy them ready cut, and, after grinding, polish them. In Rájsháhí, however, the Kumár cuts and polishes shells, while in Chittagong Muhammadans do so likewise.

Like all Ṣúdra castes, the Sánkhárí has a Bará and a Chhoṭá-bhágya division, the latter being also known as Sunárgáon Sánkhárís. The Chhoṭá-bhágya constitute a very inconsiderable body, occupying not more than twelve houses in a suburb of the city called Khálgárhnagar, where they labour at polishing shells purchased ready cut. These two sections never intermarry, although they belong to one caste, having the same "gotras" and surnames, and one Bráhman, but different "dals," or unions. Members of the Chhoṭá-bhágya have become traders, writers, timber and cloth merchants, claiming on that account to be higher in social rank than those who manufacture shell bracelets.

The main section of the Sánkhárís embraces 350 families, calling themselves Bikrampúr Sánkhárís. In Bengal they are included in the nine clean Ṣúdra castes, their Bráhman being the same as the Káyasth.

Their gotras are six in number:—

Ṣáṇḍilyá, Kaṣyapa,
Gautama, Madhu Kulyá,
Aliman, Gárgya.

Their Padavís, or patronymics, are Ṣúra, Nág, Nandí, Seña, Dhar, Dutta, and Kara.

It is rare to find a Sánkhárí who is not a follower of Vishnu or Kṛishna, while the majority are vegetarians, abstaining even from fish. Their principal festival is held on the last day of Bhádra (August-September), when they give up work for five days, and worship Agastya Ṛishí, who, according to them, rid the world of a formidable demon called Ṣankha Asura by means of the semicircular saw used by the shell-cutters at the present day. They are also strict observers of the "Jhulanjáttra" and "Janmáshṭamí" in Bhádra, festivals in honour of Kṛishna, kept by all Bengali Vaishnavas. The Sánkhárís generally are disciples of the Ṣántipur Gosáins, but a few recognise the Khardah family as their spiritual leaders.

The Sánkhárí bridegroom rides on horseback, but the bride, in red attire, is carried in a palanquin.

The president is styled Muta'bar, or Pradhán, and the seats in the assembly were formerly arranged by him according to rank, but now no distinctions are admitted. When a shell-cutter lives beyond the precincts of the Bázár he becomes an outcast, and necessarily joins the Sunárgáon division. Not many years have elapsed since a Sánkhárí who took service, educated himself, or followed any other profession, was degraded, but many are now studying in schools and colleges, and accepting employment without losing their position in society.

The shells used for manufacturing bracelets are imported from the Gulf of Manaar. Natives distinguish many varieties, differing in colour and size, but the ordinary conch shell is the Mazza, or Turbinella, napa. The trade in these shells has flourished from the earliest historical times. The "Chank" is mentioned by Abú Zaid in the tenth century of our era. Tavernier includes shell bracelets among the exports of Dacca in 1666, and adds, that in Patna and Bengal there were over two thousand persons employed in manufacturing them.[1]

Towards the end of the seventeeth century the shell trade became a monopoly in the hands of the Dutch. A French missionary in 1700 writes:[2] "It is scarcely credible how jealous the Dutch are of this commerce. It was death to a native to sell them to anyone but to the factory servants at Ceylon. The shells were bought for a trifle, but when despatched in their own vessels to Bengal, the Dutch acquired great profit."

The chank fishery[3] became a royalty of the English Government, yielding an annual revenue of 4,000*l.*, but it is now open to all the world. In former days six hundred divers were employed, and in a single season four and a half millions of shells were frequently taken, of the gross annual value of 8,000*l.* The shells are imported by English merchants into Calcutta, purchased by rich Sánkhárís, and retailed to the cutters.

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[1] Tavernier, part ii, book ii, 183-4.

[2] "Lettres Édifiantes," ii, 278.

[3] Accounts of this shell or "sea-horn" fishery are given by Jan Nieuhof in A. and J. Churchill's "Voyages, and Travels," vol. ii, 298, and, of a later date, in "Lettres Édifiantes," x, 121. (Ed. 1781.)

On the arrival of the shells the remains of the mollusc (Pittá) are extracted and sold to native physicians as a medicine for spleen enlargement. The base (Gherá), the lip, and point of the shell are then knocked off with a hammer, the chips being used as gravel for garden walks, or sold to agents from Murshídábád, where beads are made of the larger pieces, and a paint, "Maṭṭiya Sindúr," of the smaller.

In the ordinary shell the whorls turn from right to left, but when one is found with the whorls reversed, "Dakshiṇá-varta,"[1] its price is extravagant, as it is believed to ensure wealth and prosperity. One belonging to a Dacca Zamíndár is so highly prized that he refused an offer of 300 rupees.

From two to eight bracelets are made from one shell. The sawdust is used to prevent the pitting of smallpox, and as an ingredient of a valuable white paint.

The Sánkhárís have the character of being very penurious, and unusually industrious, young and old working to a late hour at night. Boys are taught the trade at a very early age, otherwise their limbs would not brook the awkward posture and confined space in which work is carried on. When sawing, the shell is held by the toes, the semicircular saw kept perpendicular, being moved sideways.

Every married Hindu woman wears shell-bracelets, which are as much a badge of wedded life as the red lead streak on the forehead. Unmarried girls, and Muhammadan females of all ranks, adorn their wrists with lac, never with shell, bracelets.

The Sánkhárí are notoriously filthy in their domestic arrangements. A narrow passage, hardly two feet wide, leads through the house to an open courtyard, where the sewage of the household collects, and is never removed. Epidemic diseases are very prevalent, and the municipal authorities are often required to interfere and compel them to adopt vaccination and cleanliness.

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[1] Reversed shells are holy, because Vishnu grasps one in his hand, and it is related that the god hid himself in it to escape from the fury of his enemies. The reversed shell is "Der linkse Koningshooren," or "Offerhoorn," of the Dutch; and Rumphius mentions that the natives of Amboyna gave 100 pagodas, or £40, for one. In Nieuhof's day, 1665, a specimen was often sold for 800 reals, or £15, and in Calcutta 400, 500, and even 1,000 rupees, have been given. Balfour's "Cyclopædia," sub. Chank.

Reversed shells of other species were formerly much valued by European virtuosos. Chemnitz describes one belonging to a burgomaster of Rotterdam, which was sold for over £10, and Dr. E. Clarke mentions one seen in Copenhagen, "not exceeding an inch in length, worth £50."

The men, as a rule, are pale and flabby, very subject to elephantiasis, hernia, and hydrocele.

Among them are certain families with white skins, light auburn or red hair, and weak blear eyes, with blue irides, who freely intermarry with other families, and transmit the peculiarity to their children.

The women are remarkable for their beauty, confinement within dark rooms giving them a light wheaten complexion. They are, however, squat, becoming corpulent in adult life, and their features, though still handsome, inanimate. They are very shy, but the fact that in former days their good looks exposed them to the insults and outrages of licentious Muhammadan officials is a sufficient excuse for their timidity. Even nowadays the recollection of past indignities rouses the Sánkhárí to fury, and the greatest abuse that can be cast is to call him a son of 'Abdúl Razzáq, or of Rájah Rám Dás. The former was a Zamíndár of Dacca; the latter the second son of Rájah Ráj Bullabh, Díwán of Bengal. It is stated that they frequently broke into houses and carried off the Sánkhárí girls, being shielded by their rank and influence from any punishment.

An account of a Sánkhárí who has raised himself to a position of great popularity by his skill, is worthy of mention. Badan Chánd Nág is no charlatan, and for twenty years he and his father have treated a considerable proportion of the fractured limbs of citizens. He does not allege, but his patients maintain, that he can effect union of a bone more quickly than the European surgeon. His treatment consists in gently rubbing the seat of fracture with "Momiyáí,"[1] and Sámbhar salt boiled in butter. A leaf of the "Madár" plant (*Asclepias*) is then laid on the limb, and over it tin splints are fastened. This treatment—far in advance of that followed by Kabíráj or Hakím—is successful in cases of simple fracture.

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[1] A bitumen brought from Persia, Kábul, and Tibet. Throughout India it is popularly believed to be the "dripping" of Negro boys, who are hung up by the heels, and roasted before a slow fire! Vigne's "Ghazni," p. 62; "J. A. S. Bengal," xlv, 51.

Since the days of Dioscorides, bitumen has by Eastern physicians been considered to possess the following qualities: "discutit, glutinat, emollit, ab inflammatione tuetur." Arabian doctors recognised two kinds, "Al qafr al Yahúdí," from the Dead Sea, and "Al Momiyáí al Qabúri," used in preparing mummies. See also "Ibn Haukal," p. 133.

SARWARIA BRÁHMANS.

A few Sarwaria, or, as they prefer calling themselves, Ráma-Chandra Bráhmans, are employed in Dacca as constables, doorkeepers, and servants in the houses of rich Bábús. They are of higher rank than the Maithila, and are very strict in expelling any of their tribe who marry in Bengal, or eat sweetmeats prepared by the confectioner.

As with the Maithila, the "Bhánjá," or sister's son, is the Purohit of the family.

SEKRÍ.

This sweeper caste has few representatives in Eastern Bengal, the ten or twelve houses occupied by them being all within the city, and, having become Muhammadans, they can with difficulty be distinguished from the population around. The Mullas having acknowledged them to be true believers, they worship in the public mosques, and are buried in the public graveyard.

Shaikh is a title assumed by all, and their names are generally taken from the day of the week, or from the month in which they were born. For instance, Shaikh Ramazán, and Shaikh Itwárí are common appellations.

At the present day the Dacca Sekrí only work at the manufacture of lucifer matches, or spills of wood tipped with sulphur.

On the east of the Meghna Sekrí colonists are employed as cultivators.

ṢILÁRÍ.

This strange race of magicians, deriving their name from the Sanskrit Ṣilá, a stone, are employed to protect crops from hailstones. They are identical with the "Gárapagárí" of the Central provinces, who are paid village servants; but in Eastern Bengal a member of any caste may become a Ṣilárí, being remunerated according to the success of his enchantments.[1]

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[1] Formerly the Ṣilárí was a paid village servant in Bengal, and officiated at an annual festival, which is no longer observed. Taylor's "Topography of Dacca," p. 266.

Chaṇḍáls, Jogís, and Vairágís are the ordinary Ṣilárís, but a Muhammadan often acts as one, his co-religionists believing as implicitly in this occult science as their Hindu brethren.

At the present day this magical art is falling into disrepute, and it is no unusual thing for the peasantry to punish a Ṣilárí who fails to protect their fields. The Ṣilárís confess that their skill is inadequate to call down a storm on a neighbour's crop, as was formerly done; but they still profess ability to drive away a cloud threatening any tract of country.

As hailstorms in Bengal occur usually in March and April, when the "Boro-dhán," or spring rice, is in the ear, the services of the magician are called for in low lands, where this crop is cultivated. When a storm is impending the Ṣilárí, summoned by the peasantry, rushes, almost naked, from his hut, with a rattan wand in his right hand. Invoking Parameṣvara, the supreme god, he ascends a mound, where, spreading abroad his hands, and waving his rod to indicate the direction the storm-cloud is to take,[1] he recites one or other of the following doggrel incantations, in the vernacular:—

I.

O Narasiṉha! Narasiṉha! mighty Narasiṉha! whom the fourteen gods fear;
On hearing the name Narasiṉha the gods and spirits bend their heads;
My Guru's name is Híra. Wherever you go, that quarter of the world is subdued,
Whether it consists of hills or mountains, trees or jungle.
Should this charm of mine fail, Mahádeva's hair will be uprooted, and fall off.

II.

Diamonds cut stones,
Rivers retire before them,
A gold knife is keen as a diamond,
I have cut it this day into thirty-two,
Begone to the mountains of the north
Having paid your tribute to the south.
Having scattered you, I go home.
My name is Ṣiva Ṣankara.

The above metrical rhapsody was obtained from Rái Chánd Vairágí, a celebrated Ṣilárí, residing at Shámgáon, in Tipperah.

The villagers present their magician with rice, or other food, when his charms have been efficacious, as money is an inauspicious gift.

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[1] Compare Exodus ix, 33.

SONÁR, SONÁR-BANIK, SUVARNA-BANIKA.

In Bengal this caste has broken up into so many divisions that it has become almost impossible to distinguish the minute shades of difference between them. It is allied to the great Bania tribe, and claims to be descended from Vaiṣya parents, although now degraded, and not included in the nine clean Ṣúdra castes. One authority[1] describes them as the offspring of a Baidyá and a Vaiṣya female; while another[2] connects them with the issue of a Bráhman and a Vaiṣya woman, and therefore the same as the Páraṣava, or mixed order, of Menu. Among the Marhattas Sonárs claim to be Upa-Bráhmaṇas, or minor Bráhmans.

The Bengal Sonárs ascribe their low position to the enmity of Ballál Sen, who ordered them to eat with Ṣúdras, which they refused to do. The incensed monarch appointed spies to watch them, who invented a story that the caste Bráhman having accepted a present from a low caste man sold it to the Sonárs. The Rájah on hearing the false charge, and without making any inquiry, issued an order degrading the whole caste.

It is much more probable, however, that Sonárs are Hindustání Banias, who, losing rank by residing in Bengal, were placed in an inferior position when the re-organisation of Hindu society was effected.

The total number of Sonár-baniks in Bengal is 60,366, of whom 12,735, or one-fifth, inhabit Burdwan, 8,195 the twenty-four Pergunnahs, 8,097 Hughli, and 292 Dacca. They diminish in numbers on the east of the Ganges; and it would seem from this that they originally settled in the central, and more peaceful, districts.

In eastern Bengal the Sonár-banik caste has four sub-divisions, namely:—

Banga,
Uttar Ráṛhí,
Dakhin Ráṛhí,
Nadiyá, or Sapta Grámí.

1. Banga.

They claim to be descendants of Sonárs resident in Bengal during the reign of Ballál Sen, and are undoubtedly the oldest branch of the family. Two Ṣreṇi are met with, Kulina and Varendra, or Maulika, inferior, which never intermarry. Every Maulika, however, asserts that he is a Kulina, and village Sonárs, by assuming similar claims, cause endless squabbles and feuds. Ward distinguishes between the Sauvarna-kár and the Sauvarna-banik; the former being goldsmiths, the latter money-changers. It is remarkable that members of the Banga engaging in the caste profession of goldsmiths are styled Sankara, or mixed, baniks, and excommunicated from the society of their brethren. In the city about forty families reside, twenty-five of whom belong to the pure town stock, and fifteen to the Grámí, or rural. These two branches are still further sundered by having two distinct Dals, or unions.

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[1] Ward's "Hindus" i, 134.

[2] Wilson's "Glossary," p. 488.

The Bangas have three gotras, Kaṣyapa, Gautama, and Vyáṣa. The "Padavi," or titles, are—

Sena,
Dhar,
Datta,
Dé,
Borál,
Maulika.
Laha,
Chanda,
Pál,
Siṇha,
Aḍḍi.

The marriage ceremonies are copied from those observed at the wedding of Ṣrí Rámachandra and Ṣíta, while in western Bengal the marriage service is that of Mahádeva and Párvatí. At the former the bridal pair, seated on stools, are carried round the court; at the latter the bridegroom stands, while the bride is borne round him. The bride wears a red dress, as well as a lofty diadem (Mukuṭa) with a red turban, from which tinsel pendants hang. The bridal attire becomes the perquisite of the barber; the dress worn on the second day falls to the Ghaṭaka.

The "Pradhán," or president of the caste assembly, is always a Kulina. The Kulina sometimes marries a Maulika girl when her dowry is large, but this alliance does not exalt her family.

The Banga Sonárs are jewellers, but, as a rule, do not manufacture ornaments. They are often bankers, traders, and shopkeepers. The poorer class accept employment as writers, but would sooner starve than cultivate the soil. The large majority are Vaishnavas, but a few follow the Tantric ritual.

2. Dakhin Ráṛhí Sonárs.

In the city reside about seventy families, who originally sought shelter in Eastern Bengal, along with the Uttar Ráṛhi and Nadiyá Sonárs, from the Marhatta invasion of 1741. Among them rage interminable disputes about precedence, and the confusion is increased by the "Padavís" being the same as those of the Banga.

The houses of Nílámbara Datta and Potiráj Dé are reckoned the first of Kulinas, and next, but at a great interval, are the children of two brothers, Chanda and Madhu, who are Síls, and reside at Balgonah, in Burdwan. Families with the titles of Borál, Laha, Chand, and Aḍḍi are deemed more aristocratic than the Maulika.

The gotras of this divisian are—

Madhu Kulyá,
Kaṣyapa,
Gautama,
Ṣáṇḍilya,
Savarṇa,
Bharadvája.

As a general rule the Dakhin Ráṛhí do not intermarry with the Uttar Ráṛhí, but take "Púri," or cake, from them, and even cooked food, if on friendly terms. The daughter of a Kulina marrying a Maulika bridegroom sinks to his level, but the daughter of a Maulika marrying a Kulina is raised to his. Dakhin Ráṛhí women dress like other Hindu females of Eastern Bengal; the Uttar Ráṛhí as women of Burdwan and Hughli.

The Dakhin Ráṛhí worship Lakshmí daily, when rice, sugar, and flowers are offered, and no woman will touch food until this duty is performed. The "goddess of wealth" is also worshipped with especial honour four times every year.

The members of this subdivision are usually employed as writers.

3. UTTAR RÁṚHÍ SONÁRS.

Many peculiarities of their earlier home are retained by this subdivision. The women still speak the Burdwan "Bháshá," or dialect, and their dress is that of Central Bengal. The gotras are many, and the following are the most important:—

Madhu Kulyá,
Ṣáṇḍilya,
Paráṣara,
Nága-Ṛishi,
Aliman,
Kaṣyapa,
Bharadvàja,
Brahma Ṛishi,
Gautama,
Savarṇa.

The titles are the same as those of other Sonárs, but they have no Maulika. Their president is styled "Múrdhanya," a Sanskrit word for highest.

The Uttar Ráṛhí still prepares the marriage space, called Marocha, which has been given up by the Dakhin Ráṛhi, and the bride wears the lofty diadem, and appendages of the Banga.

In Dacca there are about seventy families, the men being employed as clerks, accountants, and bankers. Only four annual festivals in honour of Lakshmí are kept, that on the Díwálí being omitted. Manasa Deví is propitiated with great ceremony, and on the Bhagíratha Dashará a branch of "Síj" (*Euphorbia ligularia*), sacred to the "goddess of snakes," is planted in the courtyard, and on every Panchamí, or fifth lunar day of each fortnight up to the Dashará of the Durgá Píjah, the Sonárs make offerings to it. On the great day of the feast, the Vijaya Daṣamí, the plant is plucked up and thrown into the river.

4. NADIYÁ, OR SAPTA GRÁMÍ, SONÁRS.

This subdivision constitutes a small body numbering some thirty-five households. Driven from their former homes by the Marhattas, they crossed the Ganges, and settled in Dacca.

The principal gotras are—

Madhu Kuliya,
Nága-Ṛishi,
Ṣáṇḍilya,
Savarṇa,
Ṣúra-Ṣrí.

The patronymics are Síl, Borál, Pál, Sena, Maulika, Dé, Harí Priya Dás, and Karaṇa Varí Dás.

Being a small community the Nadiyá Sonárs intermarry with the Dakhan and Uttar Ráṛhí, and easily obtain wives by giving a large dowry.

While the Ták-sál, or Mint, was open at Dacca, the Nadiyá Sonárs worked as Son-dhoas, goldwashers, or Nyáriyás, in fusing and purifying metals, but since its closure they have worked as Son-dhoas on their own account. The dust and refuse (Gád) of goldsmiths' shops are bought for a sum varying from eight anas to five rupees a *ser*, according to the amount, or nature of the business. The refuse being carefully washed the metallic particles in the sediment are transferred to shallow earthern pans and the larger separated by a skilled workman, or Kárígar. The smaller mixed with cowdung and a calx of lead form a ball, named Piṇḍi, or Peṛá. This ball being placed in a hole partially filled with charcoal, fire is applied, and as the lead melts it carries with it all gold and silver filings, forming a mass, called "Lína." This "Lína" is then dissolved in a crucible, and the gold and silver being unmelted are easily separated.

SÚNṚÍ, ṢAUṆḌIKA, ṢUṆḌAKA.

According to Hindu ideas this is one of the most degraded castes, and the following ridiculous story in the Vaivarta Puráṇa explains the origin of the first distiller, and vendor of spirituous liquors.

Ṣani, the Hindu Saturn, failing to adapt the elephant's head to the mutilated trunk of Gaṇeṣa, Viṣva-Karma, the celestial artificer, was sent for, and by careful dissection and manipulation, he fitted the incongruous parts together, and made one Kedára Sena from the slices cut off in fashioning his *chef d'œuvre*. It is further mentioned that Kedára Sena was ordered to fetch a drink of water for Bhágavatí, weary and athirst. Finding a shell on the river's bank full of water he presented it to her, being unaware that a few grains of rice left in it by a parrot

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had fermented and formed an intoxicating liquid. Bhágavatí, as soon as she had drunk, became aware of the fact, and in her anger condemned the offender to a vile and servile occupation.

The caste is subdivided into two sections, or Ṣreni, the Ráṛhí and Varendra. The former are distillers called Súnṛi; the latter traders, who have assumed the title of Sáha,[1] or merchant. By some authorities, however, the Sáha is the issue of a Ṣúdra father and a Súnṛí mother. The members of these two classes neither associate together, nor intermarry. In some parts of Bengal the caste has four divisions, the Ráṛhi, Varendra, Banga, and Magí.

The Hindustání distiller (Kalár, Kalwár) has nothing in common with the Súnṛí, as he only manufactures spirits, and will not vend it, an occupation carried on by Kurmís, or Banias.

The Súnṛí is a very degraded individual, indulging freely in intoxicating liquors. The majority of the workmen in the Government Ábkárí, or excise department, are Súnṛís, and most of the Gánjha shops are owned by them.

The Sáha, again, is perhaps the most enterprising and prosperous community in Bengal, comprising a large number of the cloth merchants, salt-traders, wood-dealers, and bankers. They are usually known as "Amda-wálah," or traders who import goods wholesale, and sell them to petty dealers by retail. Mahájan, Goldár, and Áṛhatdár, or broker, are also common designations. Notwithstanding the improved position of late years, they are still utterly abandoned in the eyes of the Hindus. Even the Bhúínmálí, who works for them, will not touch their food, and a Chaṇḍál loses caste if he lays his hand on the stool on which one of them is sitting. There is a saying among Bengalís, that if a Ṣúdra be walking down a narrow lane with only Súnṛí houses on each side, and an elephant approaches, he ought to allow the elephant to trample him under foot rather than take refuge in a house of the accursed.

Sáha is the common title of the caste, but on becoming rich the merchant adopts Dás as a surname. A well known Sáha trader of Dacca selected Ráí Chaudharí as his family name, and it has been also adopted by his son.

The Dhobá and Nápit, are members of the Súnṛí caste, the Ṣúdra washerman and barber declining to work for them. The Bráhman also, peculiar to themselves, boasts that he never accepts alms from any one not a Súnṛí; but it is quite certain that none of the clean castes would present him with charity.

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[1] Said to be a corruption of Sádhu, perfect, honest, a merchant. Wilson's "Glossary."

These Bráhmans, who assume the bombastic titles of Vidyáságar, Vidyálankár, Chakravarttí, and Páṭhak, like the Purohits of other low castes, read the funeral service at the burning Gháṭ.

Almost every member of the caste is a follower of Chaitanya, and the rich are celebrated for the ostentatious observance of the San-Kírttana chaunts in honour of Kṛishna, after the decease of any relative.

A Súnṛí will not cultivate the soil, although he does so in Central Bengal, nor will he ply as a boatman unless the boat belongs to his caste, and is entirely manned by Súnṛís. He is also prohibited from becoming a fisherman, and from selling fish in the market.

In the Mymensingh district a colony of Sáhas have taken the title of Pánjha, but can give no reason for doing so. They are chiefly Tallukdárs, writers, and shopkeepers, eating and intermarrying with Sáhas in other parts of Bengal.

In various parts of Dacca a Magí Ṣreṇí, quite distinct from the Ráṛhi, or Varendra, and accounted fallen and outcast, is to be met with. It is stated that in old days the Mags made marauding expeditions into this part of Bengal, and defiled the houses by outraging their women, as was also done with the Tántí, Telís, and Kumhárs. The Súnṛí barber and washerman work for them, but the Purohit is always distinct.

The greater number of Sáhas belong to an Aliman gotra, a few to a Kaṣyapa.

Although the Ṣúdra Nápit occasionally shaves the Sáhas, he will not attend at any of their religious ceremonies, when a member of the caste has to be employed.

The chief rites observed by this caste are the worship of Gaṇeṣa on the first of Baisákh, and the first of Aghan (Nov.-Dec.); of Gandheṣvárí on the tenth of Ásín, the Daṣamí, or day before the Durgá Pújah; and of Ganga, whenever their boats are starting on a trading voyage. The majority being Vaishnavas, animals are rarely sacrificed to any deity, but when it is done the victim is afterwards released.

Sáhas are very fond of pigeons, and in the courtyard of almost every house a dovecot is fixed, as they believe the air fanned by pigeons' wings wafts them luck. They are also devoted worshippers of Kártikeya, the Hindu god of war, constructing annually in November a life size effigy of the god, and keeping it within the female enclosure for a year. Other Hindu castes throw the image into the river immediately after the Kártik Pújah; but the Sáhas allege that their special veneration of the god is often rewarded, the barren rejoicing, and the husband becoming the joyful father of children. It is easy to understand in what way this figure gives rise to scandalous stories among Bengalís, and how the Sáha becomes a butt for the wit and sarcasm of his neighbours.

According to the census of 1872 there were 430,582 persons belonging to this caste in Bengal, of whom 63,511 resided in Dacca, and 225,558, or fifty-two per cent. of the whole Súnṛí population, in the nine eastern districts.

SURAHIYÁ, SURAIYÁ.

This class of boatmen[1] properly belongs to Maldah and Tirhut, but a few families have been long settled in Dacca, and being a small colony wives are with difficulty procured.

The Surahiyá are enterprising and hardy sailors, often met with in Eastern Bengal during the cold season in large trading vessels laden with grain, pulse, or fuller's earth, which is sold to Mahájans, and a cargo of rice shipped for the return voyage. In Gházípúr the Surahiyás are cultivators, who readily engage themselves as boatmen. They are very muscular and large boned, offering a striking contrast to the average Bengali "Mánjhís."

Their origin, like that of other boatmen, is traced to the fabulous hero Nikhád. There is a shadowy connection between the Surahiyá and Cháin. The former use the water vessels and huqqas of the latter; but the Cháin, assuming a higher rank, will smoke, but neither eat nor intermarry, with the Suraiya.

"Kalwat Malláh" is given as another name for this caste; "Jal-Chhatrí" as the ordinary title; and Kaṣyapa as the common gotra.

The Pánch Píriya creed is that usually followed, but like other boatmen, Koila Bába is worshipped on the Dashará, and various superstitious rites are observed in fulfilment of vows, and to ensure good fortune.[2]

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[1] Buchanan calls them "Suriya Malas" (i, 172), and in Bíhár they are included among the Malláhs.

[2] Walter Hamilton (i, 111) mentions that in consequence of the great famine of 1770, many Hindus, from eating food cooked by unclean hands, were outcasted, and subsequently joined a caste called Saryuriya, "because in 60 years a famine, or some other great calamity, is supposed to occur in the year Saryuriya."

The year 1770, according to Hindu calculations, was known as Ṣárvari, the thirty-fourth of the Vṛihas-pati, or cycle of 60 years, on which the natives looked for a recurrence of calamities.

Can the outcasted Saryuriya have any connection with the Suraiyá boatmen?

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SÚRAJ-BANṢÍ, SÚRYA-VANṢI.

This honourable Rájput title has been assumed, within the last few years, by a hybrid race of Indo-Chinese origin, inhabiting the jungly tract of Bhowál bordering on the alluvial plains of Eastern Bengal. Their history is a most significant one, as it exhibits the compromising spirit and assimilative nature of Bráhmanism, when brought in contact with races of lower civilisation. The Súraj-banṣís were formerly regarded as akin to the Kochh-mandáí, but the Bráhmans, taking advantage of their credulity and ignorance, led them to believe that they were descendants of the Chhatrí who, by throwing away their sacred thread, escaped from the death-dealing axe of Paraṣuráma. Accordingly, in 1871, they proceeded in a body to the house of their Zamíndár, Kálí Náráyaṇa Ráí, Ráí Bahádur, a Ṣrotriyá Bráhman, and requested him to reinvest them with the sacred cord. An offer of five hundred rupees was made, but declined. Disappointed at this unexpected rebuff they retired to consult, and, after grave deliberation, it was decided to offer two thousand rupees, when the scruples of the crafty Bráhman being laid to rest, the sacred cord was with due solemnity presented, and ever since the Súraj-banṣí have assumed the high rank of Chhatrí, to the great disgust of Hindus generally.

The Kochh-mandáí, who reside in the same jungle, assert that a few years ago the Súraj-banṣí were known as Kochh-mandáí, and that even at present "Banṣí" is their ordinary appellation. The Súraj-banṣí are peculiar to Bhowál, and are not met with beyond the limits of the Dacca district. They are certainly allied to the Kochh-mandáí, but, by marrying with low Bengali tribes, have lost the characteristic Indo-Chinese physique and physiognomy, and inherited those of Bengali lowlanders. Their original language, too, has been forgotten, and the Bengali vernacular is universally spoken. The Súraj-banṣí is generally a darker and taller, but less muscular man, than the Kochh-mandáí. Certain of them still retain the peculiar Indo-Chinese cast of features, with oblique eyes, and scanty growth of hair; but the majority have the common Bengali countenance, with bushy moustaches and voluminous cues, for they already ape the Vaishnava fashion of wearing the hair. Even now they call themselves worshippers of Vishnu, and have engaged the services of a Patit-Bráhman as Purohit. They have invented three gotras, Kaṣyapa, Aliman, and Madhu Kuliyá, and marriages into the same gotra are strictly forbidden. Furthermore, having assumed the sacred badge of the Chhatrís, they imitate them in observing the Ṣráddha on the nineteenth day after death.

By Hindus they are not admitted to belong to a clean caste, but the Ṣúdra servants are beginning to work for them, and in a few years they will doubtless have secured an established position, as the Kachárís and Manípúrís have done under exactly similar circumstances.[1] Partiality for pork, one of the besetting sins of the Indo-Chinese and Kolarian tribes, is most difficult to eradicate, in most instances surviving long after the tribe has adopted the Hindu ritual, and Hindu habits. The Kochh-mandáí affirm that the Súraj-banṣí secretly indulge in the forbidden luxury, although to curious strangers the fact is stoutly denied. Widow marriages have also been abandoned and polygamy sanctioned.

The Súraj-banṣís claim to be aborigines of Kámrúp, and believe they substantiate the claim by citing their bi-annual (in Phálgun and Baisákh) worship, held beneath a "Ṣál" tree in honour of Kámaka Deví, the tutelary goddess of that country.

The Sun (Súraj), their reputed ancestor, is worshipped with especial honour, but Durgá, Manasa Deví, and Búṛa-Búṛí, are also invoked in seasons of affliction and sickness.

SUTÁR, SÚTRADHÁRA.

This is a very low caste of carpenters met with in all parts of Bengal, and, according to the census of 1872, numbering 177,755 persons, who chiefly inhabit Mymensingh (21,479), Burdwán (15,973), Dacca (15,907), Silhet (13,097), and Tipperah (11,804). It is essentially a caste of the Delta, and it seems most probable that the boat-building trade attracted them to the chief seats of that industry. There can be little doubt that Sutárs belong to an aboriginal, and therefore despised, race, yet they have the effrontery to assert that they are descended from Karṇa, the son of Kuntí, and the Sun-god, as related in the Mahá Bhárata. Karṇa was adopted by Adhi-ratha, a charioteer of Anga (Bihár), a Sutár by profession, who consequently became a Sutár himself. It was Ballál Sen, however, who humbled them. The story goes that a complaint being lodged against the Bráhmans for not performing religious ceremonies for the caste, until all other castes had been served, the monarch, to prevent further controversy, enrolled them among the Nícha, giving them a Bráhman of their own.

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[1] The Kachárís were converted to Hinduism, and made Chhatrís of the Súraj-banṣi tribe, about A.D. 1790 ("J. A. S. of Bengal," vol. ix, 831). The Manípúrís, again, were converted about the beginning of the eighteenth century by a Mahant of Silhet (Wheeler's "Mahá Bhárata," p. 421).

The Sutár caste has three subdivisions in Dacca:—

1. Sutár, who makes boats, household furniture, beams, wheels, and ploughs.
2. Chúṛá-Kuṭí, who parch and husk rice, make wooden necklaces, and burn shells for lime.
3. Káthuria, who make ploughs, tubs, platters, and wooden agricultural implements.

The Sutárs claim, and are admitted to have, precedence of the other two divisions. Their name of "thread-holder" is derived from the Sanskrit "Sútra," the thread with which the course of the saw is marked. Sutárs are all included in one gotra, the Aliman, and invariably belong to the Vaishnava creed. In the city of Dacca about one hundred and fifty houses are occupied by them. The caste has a Pancháít, but no union (Dal), and their headman, styled Parámánik, settles disputes between members. It is derogatory for a Sutár to fell a tree, which is done by a class of Chaṇḍáls, called "Karántí," from the Sanskrit Kara-pattra, a saw. Turning (Kundí-Kárí), however, is the legitimate occupation of a carpenter, and he is permitted to make moulds used by confectioners for preparing fancy sweetmeats, and by plasterers for ornamenting cornices and roofs. Sutárs never cultivate the soil, but frequently carry on business as Mahájans, or wholesale traders. Muhammadan carpenters, unknown in Dacca, are common in Chittagong, where they are employed as shipwrights.

It is estimated that there are four hundred houses occupied by the Chúṛá-Kuṭí division in the Dacca district, and fifty in Náráyanganj alone. The members, however, are gradually relinquishing their ancestral trade, and of late years have taken Muhammadan servants to husk rice, while they themselves act as grocers, selling pulse, grain, and oils, or as writers, servants, and shopkeepers. The only wooden article now made by them is the sandal-wood necklace worn by all Hindus. The Purohit is distinct from the family priest of the other sub-divisions. The headman is styled Pradhán, and the only gotra is Aliman. The Chúṛá-Kuṭi are all Vaishnavas in creed, the Guru being the Farídábád Gosáin. Their principal festivities are the Gandheṣvarí on the tenth Asín (Sept.); and New Year's day, on the first of Baisákh.

The Káthuria subdivision, scattered throughout the Dacca district, is engaged in cultivating the soil, building boats, and manufacturing lime with the fresh water shells dredged from the extensive "Jhíls," or marshes, in the interior of Bikrampúr, being for this reason often confounded with the Chunarí caste, a perfectly distinct community.

The Bráhman of this subdivision is an Áchárjí, who performs the same religious ceremonies as the priests of the other two. The headman is known as Sardár.

The members of these three subdivisions, although intimately related, neither intermarry nor associate together.

TÁNTÍ, TÁNTUVÁYA.

This is one of the most interesting castes in Bengal. The produce of their looms has been celebrated from the earliest historical times, and the weavers have suffered more from the vicissitudes of the last century than any other class. According to their own traditions, they were brought from Maldah early in the seventeenth century, and settled in the new metropolis of the province, receiving great encouragement from the Mughal Viceroys, and the ladies of the Delhi court, who obtained their beautiful muslins from Dacca.

Although "Dacca Muslins" have acquired a world-wide celebrity, the number of weavers at the present day in Eastern Bengal is small. In 1872 there were 358,689 Tántís in Bengal, of whom only 31,457, or 8 per cent., resided in the nine eastern districts, while nearly one-third belonged to the Midnapore district. In the Dacca district 8,906 persons were returned.

The Tántís of the city of Dacca, who form the richest and most important body, have separated into two Ṣreṇí, or associations, called Baṛá-bhágiya, or Jhámpániya, from the "Jhámpán," or sedan chair in which the bridegroom sits, and Chhoṭá-bhágiya, of Káyath origin, who becoming weavers were expelled from their caste. The former number at least ten to one of the latter.

The gotras of the Baṛá-bhágiya are—

Bharadvája,
Paráṣara,
Gautama,
Madhu Kuliyá,
Kulyá Ṛishi,
Ágastya Ṛishi,
Aliman,
Ṣáṇḍilaya,
Vyása,
Kaṣyapa,
Savarṇa,
Magí.

Baisákh is the name assumed by all, although the designation was originally taken by rich persons, who had given up weaving and become cloth merchants. A few titles inherited from their forefathers, employed as weavers in the Aurang, or Company's factory, are still preserved: "Jáchandár," appraiser; "Muhkím," supervisor; "Dalál," broker; and "Sirdár," are the most common. Family nicknames are perhaps oftener met with than in any other caste, and households, called Mesha (sheep) and Chhagrí (goat), are well known to the citizens, having, it is supposed, been acquired because their ancestors had accidentally killed these animals.

With few exceptions Tántís are Vaishnavas, being probably the most obsequious disciples of the Khardah Gosáins. They have no Pancháít, and no headman, but the rich guide and instruct their poorer brethren, while the trade interests of the caste are secured by the supervision of powerful Dals, or guilds, presided over by a Dalpatí, or director.

Although he holds a degraded position in Bihár, the Tántí has had sufficient influence in Bengal to raise himself to the grade of clean Ṣúdra, having the same Purohit as the Nava-Ṣákha. The purity of a Tántí depends on the quality of the starch used in weaving. The Ṣúdra weaver prepares starch from parched rice boiled in water, or "Kái," which is not according to Hindu ideas, "Eṇto," or, as Muhammadans call it, "Jhúṭhá," leavings. Impure weavers, as the Jogís, make starch (Már) by merely boiling rice, a process that is considered utterly abhorrent.

A peculiar subdivision of outcaste Tántís belonging to a Magí Ṣreṇí reside in Mag Bazár, a suburb of Dacca, who, though excommunicated for the same reasons as the Magí Kumárs, conform to all the customs of the Ṣúdra Tántí.

The Dacca Tántís have always been celebrated for the magnificent procession which parades the streets of the city on the Janmáshṭamí, or birthday of their god Kṛishna, in Bhádra (Aug.–Sept.). As long as a Nawáb lived at Dacca, his troopers and band led the pageant, and at the present day, though divested of many of its attractions, it is still the most popular exhibition in Eastern Bengal. For many generations the Dacca weavers have resided in two quarters of the city, Tántí Bazár and Nawábpúr, and on the day following the birthday of Kṛishna a procession issues from each of these quarters, and perambulates the streets. In 1853 the processions met, and a faction fight ensued. In 1855 the Government ordered that for the future they should never be permitted to come out on the same day, and each quarter, therefore, takes precedence on alternate years, the peace of the city having been so far assured.

Kṛishna is worshipped by the Tántí Bazár section under the form of Muralí Mohan; by the Nawábpúr, as the Sáligrám, or Lukhí Náráyana.

At the present day the processions are preceded by a string of elephants, and a "Paṇja," or model of a hand, presented by a former Nawáb, is borne aloft as at the Muharram pageant.

The peculiar part of the cavalcade, however, are the "Misls," or raised platforms, carried on men's shoulders. On these are placed images of Hindu gods, figures, and often caricatures of local celebrities. On others are Nách girls and buffoons reciting comic songs, and bandying chaff with the crowd. In fact, the anniversary and the show have come to be regarded as the occasion of a holiday, when thousands of villagers throng the city bent on pleasure and amusement, which are more considered than the deity in whose honour it is held.

There is, however, another class of Tántís settled in Eastern Bengal, quite distinct from the city weavers, claiming to be the descendants of the original Tántís of Bengal, who supplied the people with cotton fabrics for ages before the reign of Jahángír. Although assuming a superiority over the Baisákhs, which is not conceded, there can be little doubt that these Banga Tántís were earlier settlers in Bengal than their rivals.

The Banga Tántís observe with especial pomp the Kámadeva Pújáh, or worship of the Indian Cupid, which, though generally neglected in Bengal, and entirely omitted by the Jhámpániya Tántís, is still kept up in Bhowál, Kámrúp, and the districts bordering on that country. It is undoubtedly a worship of earlier origin than that of Kṛishna. On the Madana Chaturdaṣí, or fourteenth day of the waxing moon of Chait (March–April), the festival is held, but it does not last for seven days as formerly. The Purohit officiates, no victims being sacrificed.

The Banga Tántís, moreover, celebrate the Janmáshṭamí, but in a different way from the Baisákhs. Two boys, gorgeously dressed, representing Kṛishna and his foster-father, Nanda Gop, are carried about in great state, and with much discordant noise.

The Viṣvakarma worship is observed on the usual day, and, as with the Baisákhs, the loom, shuttle, and other implements of weaving are adored.

The Banga Tántís are chiefly settled at Dhámráí, an old town about twenty miles north of Dacca, where they occupy about two hundred and fifty houses. Their bridal dresses are white, and not of red or other coloured silk, as with the Dacca weavers. They manufacture the native "Sári," and "Chadar," as well as Ḍoriyá and Nau-battí muslins, which are sent to Dacca to be embroidered. At Dhámráí the famous female spinners (Káṭaní), who wind the fine native thread, are still found, but in no other part of Eastern Bengal. In illustration of the delicate touch of these spinners, the story goes, that one of them wound eighty-eight yards of thread on a reel which only weighed one "Ratí," or two grains. Nowadays a Ratí of the finest thread equals seventy yards, which proves that either a coarser cotton is grown, or the women have lost their delicate sensibility of touch.

The Chhoṭá-bhágiya, or Káyath Tántís, formerly goldsmiths, took to weaving as a more profitable trade, and now eat with, and visit the Baisákhs, although they do not reciprocate the politeness. The richer families having always adopted the prerogatives of the Káyaths, have been recognised, and if wealthy, receive wives from them. At present only from twenty to twenty-five houses in Dacca are occupied by them, and several households work as goldsmiths, bankers, and engravers (Naqqásh).

Five different sorts of cloth were manufactured by the Dacca Tántís in their palmy days, but the art of making the finer qualities has been lost. The five varieties were—

1. Malmal. Muslins of the first quality included the "Ábrawán,"[1] "Tanzíb," and "Malmal" made of Deṣí cotton or Kapás; of the second quality were the "Shabnam," "Khaçah," "Jhúna," "Sarkár 'Alí," "Ganga Jal," and "Terindam;"[2] of the third were the coarser muslins, collectively called "Báftah," comprising "Hammám," "Dimtí" (? Dimyáṭí), "San," "Jangal Khaçah," and "Galá-band."
2. Ḍoriyá, striped and ribbed muslins, such as "Ráj-koṭ," "Dakhan," Pádsháhí-dár," "Kunti-dár," "Kághazí," and "Kelá-páṭ."
3. Chár-Khánah, checkered muslins, such as "Nandan-sháhí," "Anár-dána," "Kabútar-khopí," "Sá-Kuttá," "Bachhá-dár," and "Kuntí-dár."
4. Jámdání, by the early European traders called "Nainsukh,"[3] or embroidered muslins. The different sorts are distinguished by the coloured flowers, sprigs (Búṭí), or network pattern on them. The commonest are "Sháh-barga-búṭí," "Chawal," "Mel," "Tirchhá," and "Dublí-jál."
5. Kashída, or Chikan, muslins embroidered with Múgá, or Tasar silk, generally dyed red, blue, or yellow. The commoner ones are "Kaṭáw-Rúmi," "Naubatti" or "Naubatí," "Yahúdí," "'Azízullah," and "Samundar Lahar."

The common Dhotí, Chadar, and Oṛhní, or wrapper with a coloured or embroidered end, were always regarded as distinct from the foregoing being woven at their homes by weavers of various castes.

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[1] Ábrawán, literally running water, was solely made for the Delhi Zanánah, and the following stories regarding its gossamer-like texture are still told by the natives. A daughter of Aurangzíb, one day on entering the room, was rebuked for wearing immodest drapery, but justified her conduct on the plea that she was wearing seven suits (Jámá). Again, in the reign of 'Alí Vardí Khán (1742-56), a Dacca Tántí was flogged, and banished from the city for not preventing his cow from eating up a web of Ábrawán, which had been laid out to bleach on the grass.

[2] Probably from Arabic T̤arah, mode, and Persian Andám, figure.

[3] Nayana-Sukha, pleasing to the eye.

On glancing over the preceding list one is struck by the predominance of Arabic, Persian, and Hindi words, and the rarity of Sanskrit and Bengali.

That weaving, like other native arts, was known in Hindustán prior to the foundation of the Bengal kingdom is beyond a doubt, and that the earlier settlers brought it with them into the Delta is likely, but it would seem that either the names given by the dominant Muhammadans displaced the native ones, or that the liberal Mussulmán rulers stimulated, it may be developed, the manufacture of the finer sorts of muslins. That the inhabitants of Bengal at an early period made cotton cloth of wondrous fineness is undoubted, for the two Muhammadan travellers of the ninth century mention that in an Indian country called Rahmi[1] were woven cotton garments "so fine that they may be drawn through a ring of middling size." Unfortunately we possess no further evidence until A.D. 1506, three hundred years after the Muhammadan conquest, when the Roman Vartomannus[2] visited the fabled city of Bengalla, where the finest cotton and silk in all the world was produced, and whence yearly sailed fifty ships laden with cotton and silk goods. The earliest traveller, however, who gives us the names of the fine cotton fabrics of Bengal, is the Arab author of the "Muhíṭ," written in 1554.[3] He mentions among the goods exported from Chittagong by his countrymen a fine cloth (Chautár), muslin sashes, called Malmal, the finest being known as Malmalí Sháhí, terms which are Hindi and Persian. Furthermore, when Cæsar Frederick visited Chittagong (1563–81), "bombast cloth of every sort" was exported thence. After his day the authorities are numerous, and names identical with those in use in the present day are cited.

The conjecture that the Muhammadans merely developed an already flourishing trade is strengthened by the fact that the terms in use by the Dacca weavers for the warp, woof, shuttle, and loom generally are Sanskrit, while later improvements, such as the Shána, or reed, the Charkhá, or spinning wheel, and the Daftí, or reed frame, are Persian.

The decline of the cotton trade of Eastern Bengal has been sketched by a former resident of Dacca, Mr. James Taylor,[4] while much curious information is contained in Mr. Bolt's "Considerations," and in the works of Edmund Burke. Under the Mughal government, and even as late as the Nawábship of 'Alí Vardí Khán (1742–56), the weavers manufactured in perfect liberty, and the enterprising among them advanced money to promote the trade, but with Siráj-ud-daulah (1756–7) the decadence began, and, during his eventful reign, seven hundred families of weavers left their homes at Jangalbáṛí, in Mymensingh, owing to oppression, and emigrated to other districts. Before 1765, when the English obtained the Díwání of Bengal, bullion was regularly imported from Europe to meet the requirements of the traders, but after that day advances were made from the provincial treasuries to buy the annual stock, or "investment." This gave a new and unprecedented stimulus to weaving, and in 1787, the most prosperous year on record, the estimated prime cost of the cloths entered at the custom house of Dacca amounted to fifty lakhs of rupees, or 625,000*l*. This prosperity, however, was very deceptive, being founded on injustice and intolerable oppression. The first decline may be traced to the rapacity of the "Banyans" and Gomastas, who arbitrarily decided the quantity of goods each weaver was to deliver, the prices he was to receive, while his name being entered on a register, he was not permitted to work for anyone but his own Gomasta. When the annual supply was ready the Gomasta held a bazár at which the Jáchandár, or appraiser, fixed the price of the goods, but the rascality, Mr. Bolts says,[1] was beyond imagination, and the prices were often fifteen per cent. often forty, below the market rate.

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[1] Rahmi, however, may not be Bengal, but as it was the country of elephants, of a shell currency, and of the "Karkandan," or unicorn (rhinoceros), the assumption is not altogether groundless. Elliot's "History of India," vol. i, 361.

[2] "Ludovici Vartomanni Navigatio," p. 259.

[3] Journal "A. S. of Bengal," vol. v, 467.

[4] "A Descriptive and Historical Account of the Cotton Manufacture of Dacca, in Bengal," by a former resident of Dacca. London, 1851.

The deplorable condition of the weavers in 1773 is depicted in the following extract from a letter written by Mr. Rouse, the chief of Dacca.[2] "The weavers are in general a timid, helpless people; many of them poor to the utmost degree of wretchedness, incapable of keeping accounts, industrious as it were by instinct, unable to defend themselves if oppressed, and satisfied if with continual labour they derive from the fair dealing and humanity of their employer a moderate subsistence for their families."

The following incident that occurred in 1767 gives a vivid idea of the state of matters in Dacca at that period. Mr. Thomas Kelsall, chief of Dacca, being informed that a certain weaver, Kṛishna Pál Kumár, was suspected of selling muslins to the French factory, ordered him to be seized, but he found shelter with the French. His relatives, however, were imprisoned and beaten, and their houses pillaged. Upon this the weaver gave himself up to the Díwán, Bhikam Lál Ṭhákur, who ordered him to be flogged, after which he was confined in the factory for eleven days, during which time the Peons fleeced him of forty-nine rupees and two pieces of cloth. By Mr. Kelsall's order his head was shaved, his face blackened "with lime and ink," and being mounted on an ox,[1] he was paraded through Nawábpúr, where the brokers and Paikárs lived. After three more days the accused was forwarded to the Nawáb for trial, who, finding no fault, discharged him.

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[1] "Considerations," part i, 193.
[2] Burke's Works (Bohn's Edition), iv, 73.

This hateful system was at last swept away, and the weavers for a short time enjoyed comparative freedom of trade, and unusual prosperity; but in 1769 Arkwright obtained his patent, in 1779 Crompton invented the mule, and the cotton manufactures of Lancashire have gradually driven the finer and less durable fabrics of the Bengali weavers out of the market, and all but annihilated the trade.

(*a*) HINDUSTÁNÍ TÁNTÍS.

The Hindustání, or Mungírya, weavers are very common in Dacca, where they comprehend a large proportion of the "Moṭhiás," or coolies, street porters, pankha pullers, gardeners, and packers of jute; while at home they are weavers and cultivators.

Two divisions are met with, the Kanaujiya and Tirhutiya; the former the more numerous, being of higher rank than the latter, who are despised and shut out from all social intercourse.

In Bihár the Tántí is unclean; in Dacca he is included among the Nava Ṣákha.

The Kanaujiya have one gotra, the Kaṣyapa. They worship "Máhá-mayá," or Durgá, in fulfilment of vows, keeping the ninth and tenth days of the Durgá Pújah as holydays, consecrated to her. On a certain date in Kártik, they proceed to an open plain, and sacrifice a male goat to Kálí, a "Khaçí" to Madhu Kunwár, who, they say, was a Tántí.

On the sixth day after a birth the Chhaṭhi is held, and on the twelfth the mother goes to the well, smears red lead on the edge in the name of Kamalá (Lakshmí), then draws water and carries it within doors, when she is pronounced clean.

The Tirhutiya, degraded by carrying palanquins, and by acting as musicians at their homes, collect in Dacca during the jute season, and are remarkable for their squalor and stupidity. They also work as syces, gardeners, boatmen and musicians.

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[1] A donkey was the animal usually employed, but it does not live in the damp climate of Dacca. This punishment is called by the Hindus "Gadhe pár chaṛhána;" by the Muhammadans "Tashhír."

Flesh and fish are eaten by them, and each time spirits are drunk a few drops are offered to Mahádeva. All belong to one gotra, the Paráṣara. A Hindustání Bráhman officiates at religious ceremonies, and the Guru is usually a Sannyasí. The title of Bráhman is conferred on the sister's son (Bhánjá), and great deference is paid him, although through ignorance unable to preside at the family assembly.

Kálí, Durgá, and Mahádeva are worshipped, but the majority follow the teaching of one Buddh Rám, a Mochí of Tírhut, who founded a sect, differing in some slight respects from that of Nának Sháh. They observe few caste usages, but many superstitious rites, such as burning "Ghi" in a lamp and adding rosin, in execution of vows.

The Levirate marriage is still lawful, and the purificatory ceremonies performed on the twelfth day are the same as those of the Kanaujiyá. The wedding expenses are borne by the bridegroom, and the bride is carried with much parade in a palanquin, enclosed with curtains (Mihaffa).

In Tirhut Tántis weave, grow opium, and cultivate the soil.

With both classes of Tántís, the headman, Sirdar, or Mahto, is a very important personage, who accepts contracts, acts as purveyor, and keeps all accounts.

TAMBOLÍ, TÁMBÚLI.

This caste is not numerous in Bengal, but, wherever found, is regarded as one of the clean Ṣúdra castes, still wearing the Bráhmanical cord in some parts of Hindustán, although it has been disused for ages in others. In Bengal the term Tambolí is applied to any person engaged in retailing Pân,[1] and is not confined, as it ought to be, to the members of a particular caste. The census rolls, by enumerating 59,726 persons as belonging to the caste, have endorsed this popular use of the word, while in Dacca, where there are not fifty individuals pertaining to it, the number entered is 200. The few resident in the city state that their ancestors came from the Burdwán district, where they still send for their wives, as the Hindustání Tambolí refuses to give his daughters in marriage to the Bengali.

The Hindustání Tambolí caste, members of which are occasionally met with in Eastern Bengal, has seven, the legitimate number of Ṣreṇí, and preserve the connection with their original home at Benares and Mungír, by obtaining wives from these places. The seven branches are—

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[1] Támbúla, the leaf of Piper Betel.

Maghaiyá,
Tirhutia,
Bhojpúria,
Kanaujiyá,
Kurram,
Karan,
Súryá-dvija.

It has only one gotra, the Kaṣyapa. Yellow silk is the proper bridal dress, but should the family be poor, cotton dyed with turmeric is unobjectionable. In Hindustán the Tambolí often acts as a Pansárí, or druggist; when domiciled in Bengal he keeps stores, sometimes wine shops.

The Bengali Tambolí, again, have three gotras, Kaṣyapa, Bharadvája, and Vyása. Their titles, or "Padaví," are—

Sen,
Pál,
Khur,
Datta,
Singh,
Chail,
Dé,
Rakhít.

The most common honorary title is Chaudharí.

The bride and bridegroom still dress in yellow, and ride in a Lálkí, or Ḍolí, a palanquin with an elongated pole, and a canopy overhead.

In Eastern Bengal the Tambolí never cultivates Pân, and, having rivals in the sale of the leaf, is gradually taking to other occupations. In Hindustán selling Pân is the privilege of the caste, but in Dacca the "Khílí-wálás" are Khatrís, Káyasths, Namu-Ṣúdras, and often Muhammadans. A "Khílí" is a packet ready made for chewing, and four of them equal one "Dháná."

The aromatics masticated with Pân differ in Bengal from those used in Upper India. Bengalis add cloves, dill, coriander, Ajwáyan,[1] cinnamon, and long pepper; while the Hindustánís prefer small cardamons (Gujrátí iláchí), mace, and rose water.

Only two kinds of betle-nut are known in Bengal, the Dakhaní or Penang nut, which is rare, and very expensive, and the Deṣí, or common nut, grown in every village of Bengal, and universally chewed.

The lime, too, mixed with the "Kath" (Catechu) is of two qualities. In Dacca Silhet lime slaked, and mixed with Dahí, or curds, is in general use, while in other parts of the province lime prepared from fresh water shells by the Chunarí caste, is alone used.

[1] *Ligusticum Ajowan*, a favourite culinary and medicinal spice. It is the "Yavánika," or "Brahma-darbhá," of Sanskrit writers.

TOIL-PÁL, TELÍ, TAILÍ, TAILIKA, TAILA-KÁRA.

In Eastern Bengal there are two great subdivisions of this caste, the Toil-pál, or Manuhar Pál, and the Telí, the former being the richer and more numerous. The Toil-pál are frequently distinguished by the epithet "Do-paṭṭí," from having adopted the Ṣúdra marriage custom of carrying the bride and bridegroom on stools. The Telí, again, are known as "Ek-gáchhí," from their planting a "Champa" tree, on which the bridegroom sits, while the bride is carried round him several times, as with the Gandha-baniks.

Originally, however, there were no divisions, and all oilmen belonged to one caste, but wealth having begot new objects of desire, the richer families, ashamed of their ancestral occupation, have adopted a new name to conceal their parentage. In Nadiyá and Kishnaghar another separation has taken place, the Tilís affecting to be of a higher lineage than the Telís, although they still retain the old family titles. Wealth and prosperity have made them give up the manufacture of oil, and led them to become "Amdawáláh," traders buying goods wholesale and selling them by retail.

In the northern parts of the Dacca district, beyond the limits of the Ballálí country, the oilman caste has other divisions varying in almost every Parganah. In the Ráípúra jurisdiction there are four classes, the "Satrah," or seventeen families; the "Báís," or twenty-two; the "Chaubís," or twenty-four; and the "Chár," or four, each taking rank in the order named, and large dowries being given by the last three for wives belonging to the first class.

In Dacca the Toil-páls and Telís intermarry, and are regarded as clean Ṣúdras. The gotras common to both are Aliman, Ṣáṇḍilyá, and Kaṣyapa. The Padavís, or family surnames, are—

Pál, Dé,
Nandí, Kúndú.

Chaudharí and Shiqdár, honorary titles bestowed by the native government, are common among them, while the headman is styled Mundle. In former days their unions (Dals) were notorious for the faction fights which broke out whenever differences of opinion were expressed. No "Dal" exists at the present day, but the Mundle summons a Pancháít when required.

The degraded Kolú caste found in other parts of Bengal are not met with in Dacca. There are, however, two outcast classes of oilmen in Eastern Bengal, who have been excommunicated because they manufacture oil in a novel manner; the first, or Gáchhua Telí, express the oil by crushing the seed between wooden rollers; the second, or Bhúnja Telí, parch the seed, and then extract the oil.

The pure Telís only extract Til oil from the sesamum seed, and caste is forfeited if any other oil be manufactured. The "Ghání," or oil mill driven by bullocks, is never used, the oil being prepared in the following manner. The seeds are boiled, and given to the Muhammadan Kúṭí to husk. After being sifted, the Telí puts them into large vats (Jálá), boiling water being poured in, and the seeds allowed to soak for twelve hours. In the morning the liquid is beaten with bamboo paddles (Ghoṭna) and left to settle, when the oil floating on the surface is skimmed off and stored, no attempts to purify it being made. The refuse (Khalí) is given to cattle.

The Telí caste is found in all parts of the country, the Til oil being eaten by Hindus at every meal, but oilmen are chiefly massed on high lands, where the Til plant (*Sesamum orientale*) grows best. In 1872 the oilman caste, including the Telí, Tilí, and Kolú throughout Bengal, numbered 572,659 persons, while in Dacca alone it comprised 5 Telí, 556 Kolú, and 13,150 Tilís, or a total of 13,711 individuals. It has been already pointed out that this repudiation of the primary name is not defended by the caste itself, nor attributed to any better motive than the pretension of the richer families. The Kolú, again, has probably been confounded with the Muhammadan "Kolú," engaged in expressing oil.

The Telí caste is a Vaishnava one. Their principal festivals are those in honour of Lakshmí, Sarasvatí and Gandheṣvarí, the last being celebrated on the Dashará in Aṣwín (Sept.–Oct.), and not on the full moon of Baisákh (April–May) as with the Gandha-baniks. Many oilmen have given up the oil trade and become bankers, cloth-dealers, and shopkeepers, but, like other clean Ṣúdrás, will not sell spirits, or cultivate the soil.

Members of this caste have acquired historical renown. Kṛishna Kánta Nandí, better known as Kánta Baboo, the "Banyan" of Warren Hastings, immortalised by the eloquent invectives of Edmund Burke, was a Telí by caste, and did much to raise its position among the Hindus. On visiting Jagannáth, he offered to provide an "Atka," or assignment of land for the maintenance of the poor, but the "Paṇḍá," or presiding priest, refused to accept it from the hands of such an unworthy person. Kánta Baboo successfully appealed to the Paṇḍits of Nadiyá and Hughlí, who decided that the Telí, by using the balance (Tulá) in his trade, must necessarily belong to the Bania, a clean Ṣúdra caste. Kánta Babu died in 1780, and it is said that he first introduced the "Nath," or nose-ring, among the females of his caste, it having previously been only worn by Bráhmans, and the higher Ṣúdras. The present representative of his family, Mahárání Sarnamáyí of Kásimbázár, is renowned for her charity and munificence in support of works devised for the advancement of her countrymen and countrywomen.

Many of the wealthiest gentlemen of Bengal are members of the Telí caste, and the Kúndú family of Baghyakúl, and the Pál Chaudharís of Lohu-jang, in Dacca, are second to none of the merchants of Bengal.

TIN-WÁLAH.

This is the name of a flourishing trade followed, without los of caste, by Ghulám Káyaths and Sonár-baniks, who make boxes, water pipes, lanterns, and standing lamps of zinc, tin sheeting, or the tin lining of old packing cases, and paint them with various gaudy colours.

TÍYARS.[1]

In various parts of India races called by this name are found, but it is highly improbable that they spring from the same parent stock. Dr. Caldwell[2] states that Teers (properly Tívárs, or islanders) of Southern India "are certainly immigrants from Ceylon." In Maisúr[3] the Tíyars, or Shánárs, included among the Panchaman, or outcast tribes, worship peculiar gods symbolised by stones, drink spirits, and eat the flesh of swine, fowls, and goats. Wilson defines Tíyar as a caste in Malabar, whose occupations are agriculture and "Táṛí" drawing. Sir H. Elliot[4] identifies the Tíyar of Hindustan with the Dhímar, an offshoot of the Káhar caste. Mandelslo,[5] again, in 1638, found in Gujarát a tribe called "Theer," or "Halál-Khors," employed as sweepers and executioners, "qui ne sont Payens, ni Mahometans." In Oudh the "Teehurs have no fixed or defined religion, live in great poverty, eating anything, are expert thieves, but industrious peasants, and are disowned by both Hindus and Muhammadans."[6]

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[1] In Purchas they are called "Tiberi," and in other books of travel "Teermen."

[2] "Grammar of the Dravidian Languages," Introd. p. 110.

[3] Buchanan's "Mysore," ii, 415.

[4] "Supplemental Glossary," i, 80.

[5] "Voyage des Indes," Liv. i, 219.

[6] "The People of India," ii, 85.

In Bengal, on the other hand, the fisher Tíyar belongs to a semi-Hinduized aboriginal, or perhaps Dravidian race, deriving its name from the Sanskrit Tívara,[1] a hunter, or perhaps fisherman. In most districts the tribe has assumed the honourable title of Ráj-baṉsí, as the Kochh have also done, probably, as Buchanan thinks, because in prehistoric times they were settled in the Gangetic provinces, and ruled over by a Rájah of their own.

As a race the Tíyars are short and muscular, with prominent cheek bones, dark brown, almost black, complexions, thick and generally projecting lips, and long coarse hair worn in a cue, which has often a reddish tinge towards the tip, a peculiarity common to them and other low castes, which, although in the first instance produced by exposure, is now, if not hereditary at least characteristic. In Eastern Bengal, where no subdivisions exist, the Tíyars call themselves Ráj-baṉsi, or sometimes, as in Mymensingh, Tilak Dás, while those living on the Ganges lay claim to the title of Súraj-baṉsí. According to Buchanan the Tíyars of Bhágalpúr are divided into "Báman-jagya," who are cultivators and clean Ṣúdras, and "Govaríya," who fish, eat pork, drink spirits, and are outcasts. Wherever they are regarded as pure, a Dasnámi ascetic acts as Guru, and a Maithila Bráhman as Purohit; when impure, a Gosáin of Bengal is Guru, and a Patit, or degraded Bráhman, is Purohit.

In Bihár and Bengal generally, Tíyars are reckoned impure, and along the northern bank of the Ganges Tíyars employed in manufacturing mats of the "Nal" reed, and known as Nal Tíyars, are considered so utterly vile that the fisher Tíyars repudiate any fellowship with them.

The Tíyar caste is distributed irregularly through Bengal. In Bihár they number 49,717 souls, while in Bengal proper 331,661 individuals are returned, of whom 141,213, or 42 per cent., belong to Rangpúr; 49,709 to the 24 Pergunnahs; 23,051 to Hughli; 16,304 to Midnapúr; 17,364 to Dinájpúr; 14,451 to Mymensingh; and only 7,988 to Dacca. In Orissa, again, there are only 3,743 Tíyars.

In Dacca the Tíyars occupy an uncertain position, in one part of the district being pure and Pancha-varta, having the five Ṣúdra servants working for them, while in another, being unclean, these servants are members of their own caste. Tíyars in Eastern Bengal are usually fishermen, but where the fishery has become unproductive, or the river has silted up, they are found cultivating the soil, keeping shops, and acting as boatmen. They manufacture their own nets, but their long narrow boats, called "Jalká," are made by Chaṇḍáls.

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[1] From the root "Tíra," a shore, and connected with "Dhívara" a fisherman.

As is done by all Bengali fishermen, the Jal Pálani, on the "Tilwá" Sankrántí in Mágh (Jan.-Feb.), when the sun enters Capricorn, is observed by the Tíyars. The close time lasts from two to fifteen days, but the demand for fish being steady they catch on the eve of the festival an extra supply, and keep them alive for purposes of sale, there being no offence in selling, although there is in catching, fish at that period, when prices being high, profits are unusually good.

Among Tíyars three social grades are recognised, the highest being the " Pradhán," or chief families, next the "Parámániks," while the rest go to form the " Gaṇa," or lower orders. The last can only intermarry with the higher by paying a large sum of money, the father receiving in all cases money for his daughter, so that female children are more valued than among the true Hindus. Widows never marry, but either earn a livelihood by selling fish, by manufacturing string, or, if desirous of change of life and scene, by becoming Boistubis (Vaishnavís).

Tíyars are almost to a man Vaishnava in creed, their religious ceremonies being always held beneath trees. The Seorhá (*Trophis aspera*), a very common scrubby plant, is held in especial veneration by them, and its shade is usually selected as the scene of their worship; but should this tree be not at hand, the Ním, Bel, or Gujálí (*Shorea robusta*), forms an efficient substitute. Hindustání Tíyars sacrifice a goat to Kálí on the Diwálí, and the animal, not being decapitated in the orthodox Hindu way, is stabbed with a sharp pointed piece of wood, a practice universal among the aboriginal races of India, after which, as with the Dosáds, the flesh is eaten by the worshippers. Bengali Tíyars, on the other hand, sacrifice a swine to Buṛa-Buṛi on the Paus (Dec.-Jan.) Sankrántí, slaughtering it in the same way as their Hindustání brethren. At the Ganga festival in Jeth (May) they offer a white kid, pigeons, and milk, and adore with great solemnity Mánasa Deví, in the month of Ṣrávan (July-August).

As was natural, the Tíyars have peopled the waters and streams with beneficent and wicked spirits, whose friendship is to be secured, and enmity averted, by various religious rites. Along the banks of the river Lakhya they worship Pír Badr, Khwájah Khizr, and, in fulfilment of vows, offer through any Mussulmán, a goat to Madár, whom they regard as a water god, but who may be identified with Sháh Madár Badí'uddín. In stormy weather, and in bad fishing seasons, they invoke Khala-Kumárí, a Naiad, to whom the first fruits are presented in the same way as Hindus do to Lakshmí.

In Purneah Tíyars worship a peculiar deity, called Prem Rájah, or Pamiráj, who they say belonged to their tribe, and was celebrated brigand residing at Bahurágar in Tirhut. Having been on many occasions favoured by the deity, he was translated (Aprakáṣa), and disappeared along with his boat. In 1864, one Baijua Tíyar gave out that Pamiráj had appeared to him in a vision, and ordained that the Tíyars should cease to be fishermen, and devote themselves instead to certain religious rites which would procure general prosperity. Great excitement ensued, and in February, 1865, about four thousand Tíyars from Ghazípúr, Benares, and the adjoining districts, assembled at Gogra in Purneah, and after offering holy water to a private idol belonging to Baijua, which he said came to him out of a bamboo post, 3,000 goats were sacrificed. Shortly afterwards another meeting of the tribe was held in the Benares district, at which a murder was committed. This movement was a repetition of a precisely similar one among the Dosáds of Bihár, in 1863, and, like it, was short-lived and unsuccessful.[1]

VAÍṢYA.

It has been the opinion of most writers on the castes of Eastern India, that the Vaíṣya no longer exists. Ward[2] says that they have become blended with the Ṣúdras; Buchanan[3] identifies them with the Bania caste; Mr. Beames[4] regards the caste as extinct with the exception of a small body of Bais Banias in Oudh, whose claim, however, is disputed by some; and Mr. Beverley[5] in the census report, expresses the opinion that the claims of any trading class to be considered pure Vaíṣyas are "absolutely worthless."

In the Bhowál Parganah of Dacca, and at Jahángírpúr in the Mymensingh portion of Bhowál, a considerable colony of persons calling themselves Vaíṣyas, and recognised as such by the higher castes, has been settled from time immemorial. A few families are also to be met with at Chát Mohur in the Ráj-sháhí district.

The duties devolving on the Vaíṣya caste, according to Menu, were agriculture, trade, and attendance on cattle; but its members were likewise expected to understand the proper seasons for sowing seed, the qualities of different soils, the prices of gems, cloth, iron, coral, and perfumes, and the ordinary weights and measures.

The progenitor of the caste is said to have sprung from the thigh of Brahma, hence the synonyms of "Úravya" and "Úruja." The other names of the caste are "Arya," Bhúmiṣpṛik, Vit, Dvija, Vaṇik, Bhúmijíví, Vyanaharta, Vártika, and Pañik.

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[1] Annual Report on the Administration of the Bengal Presidency for 1865-6, p. 27.

[2] Vol. i, 65, 91.

[3] "Eastern India," vol. i, 161; ii, 735.

[4] Elliot's "Supplemental Glossary," vol. i, 166.

[5] Census Report for 1872, p. 171.

The Vaíṣyas of Eastern Bengal can give no account of themselves, nor do they possess any traditions of their original home. They deny that Ballál Sen ruled over, or reorganised them, and boast that no honorary titles inherited from ancestors serving the Muhammadan government survive. For these reasons they regard themselves as exceptionally pure, having lived uncontaminated amid the changes of the country.

The Vaíṣyas are generally short and squat, some having fine aquiline noses and prominent superciliary ridges, while others have broad cheek bones, badly formed chins and lower jaws. Their physignomy suggests cunning combined with intelligence, but many exhibit the inanimate vacant expression so common among Bengali low castes.

The Vaíṣyas have relinquished many of the peculiar duties enjoined by Menu, though still wearing the sacred cord, composed of three strands knotted together, and another disconnected one of three threads, called "Utarí." The ceremony of tonsure, "Chúḍá-Karman," is observed before the thirteenth year, not postponed to the twenty-fourth after conception, as laid down by Menu, and on this occasion the youth is invested with the Bráhmanical cord. Vaíṣyas repeat the whole of the Gáyatrí, but the Bráhmans assert, that at the present day few know more than three-fourths of it, and not having full permission to bestow a blessing on the Ṣúdras they twist the "Poitá" round the right thumb, and holding the right hand on a level with the navel confer the usual benediction. Vaíṣyas are permitted to read one of the four Vedas, and that always followed is the Yajur-veda. Each household celebrates by itself the Sáligrám, Chakra, and Vishnu Pújahs, although Bráhmans dispute their right to do so, without requiring the services of the Guru, or Purohit, who are Ṣrotriyá Bráhmans. In creed the caste is a Vaishnava one, yet a few Ṣákta worshippers are met with. The Vaíṣyas formerly committed the heinous sin, in Hindu eyes, of marrying in their own "gotra;" but of late years, in order to stay the scandal, new "gotras" have been formed. The most common are—

Aliman,
Kaṣyapa,
Ṣáṇḍilya,
Madhu Kuliyá,
Kátyáyana.

They have no peculiar titles, but Gupta is often added to their names, while individuals employed as assistants to merchants frequently assume the surname of Biṣwas,[1] literally a holder of one-fourth share. Menu affirms that the first part of a Vaíṣya name should indicate wealth, the second prosperity; but the Bengali Vaíṣyas have ceased conforming to this rule, and the names ordinarily met with are Rám Kamár, Dev Náráyana, Ṣítala Chandra, or Rám Gopála, to which the surname Vaíṣya is always appended.

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[1] In Puraniyá Biṣwas means a storekeeper, while in Dacca Bháṇḍárí is used in the same sense.

A Vaíṣya was of old allowed to marry a Ṣúdra woman as his second wife, but this custom, owing to the hard times of modern life, has died out.

Baidyás and Káyasths residing within the Ballálí country refuse to touch food prepared by the Vaíṣyas, but those living beyond the limits readily do so.

The Vaíṣya is generally a tolerable Bengali scholar, but few learn English, as it entails expense, and delays the young from starting in life. In Mymensingh a few enter government employ, but the majority are Wakíls, Mukhtárs (attorneys), Tahsíldárs, and Amíns, or land surveyors. Formerly the cultivation of the soil was general, but nowadays holding a plough is considered dishonourable, while managing a harrow is admissible.

When a Vaíṣya meets a Bráhman he does not, like other Hindus, make the salutation "Praṇáma," as the Bráhman bestows his benediction without it. Among Vaíṣyas the period of impurity after a death is fifteen days. All the Hindu festivals are observed by them, but the favourite one is that in honour of Lakshmí, the goddess of wealth.

SECTION IV.

ARMENIANS.

SETTLEMENT IN PERSIA.
SETTLEMENT IN INDIA IN SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES.
CENSUS OF, IN BENGAL.
CAUSES OF THEIR DEGENERACY.
PRIESTS, RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS, CUSTOMS, MARRIAGES.
PROSPECTS OF THE RACE IN INDIA.

ARMENIANS.

In 1605 Sháh 'Abbás invaded Armenia, and transferred 12,000 inhabitants of Julfa, on the Araxes, to the neighbourhood of Ispahán, where he allotted them land on the banks of the Zindarúd, which subsequently became the site of a town, since known as New Julfa. While Sháh 'Abbás lived, he treated the settlers with remarkable liberality, advancing money without exacting interest, granting the free exercise of their religion, and permitting them to elect a "Kalán-tar," or headman, of their own. No Muhammadan was allowed to reside within the walls, and, as the murder of an Armenian could only be expiated by the rigorous law of retaliation, the inhabitants were respected, and favoured, by the Persians themselves. During the reign of Sháh Husain (1694–1722), however, many of these privileges were repealed, and the slayer of an Armenian was absolved from all punishment on payment of a load of corn. The prosperity of the settlement was destroyed by Sháh Mahmúd and the Afgháns in 1722, but not until after a gallant though unavailing resistance.[1] Previous to the Afghán invasion the Persian Armenians numbered about 70,000 souls, but in 1742 the oppressive exactions of Nádir Sháh forced many to leave their homes, and seek an asylum in India and other countries. As a consequence, in 1829,[2] only 500 poor Armenian families resided in New Julfa, where formerly 2,500 families throve, and throughout Persia their numbers had dwindled to 12,383 persons. In 1877 two thousand Armenians remained in Julfa, the children being educated by the Church Missionary Society. Education is only encouraged as a means of enabling the young men to emigrate from poverty-stricken Persia to India.[3]

We possess no information regarding the first appearance of the Armenians in India; but we know that in the sixteenth century they were settled at Goa, and that a deputation visited, in 1590, the court of Akbar.[4] At Agra is still shown the tombstone of one Khwájah Martinas, who died in 1611.[1] It was, however, into Western India that Armenians chiefly congregated. In 1623 Pietro della Valle found the Dutch intermarrying with them; and in 1638 Mandelslo encountered Armenians in Surát and Gujarát. Tavernier,[2] moreover, has preserved the name of one Corgia, brought up by Sháh Jahán, an excellent wit and poet, much in the King's favour, who had conferred on him many fair commands, though he could never by threats or promises win him to turn Muhammadan. Bernier, too, mentions Armenians in Delhi, who were ruining the inland trade of the Dutch by their competition.

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[1] Hanway's "Historical Account," ii, 160.
[2] "History of Persia," by Sir J. Malcolm, ii, 374.
[3] "Through Persia by Caravan," by Arthur Arnold, 1877.
[4] Elliot's "History," vi, 85.

If Mr. Glanius is to be relied on, a body of Armenian cavalry, celebrated for its horses and discipline, accompanied the army of Mír Jamlah, in 1662, when he invaded Assam.

Towards the end of the seventeenth century many Armenians resided at Chinsurah, and they possessed " a pretty good garden " opposite Calcutta. During the latter days of Muhammadan rule the principal Armenian settlement in Bengal was at Saidábád, near Murshídábád, whence were annually exported valuable assortments of piece goods and raw silk.

The Armenians have always been distinguished as enterprising traders throughout Asia, and as early as 1690, when the East India Company was entering upon its marvellous career, Mr. Charnock received[3] instructions to employ them to sell the annual shipments in the interior, and buy fine muslins and other valuable goods. The ostensible reason for this preference being that they could transact business with the native traders better than agents of the Company provided with a firmán.[3] In 1694, again, a proposal was made to the Armenians of Ispahán to sell the goods of the Company, or barter them for silk, money, and " Caramania wool;" but this project failed, as the Armenians themselves imported, by Aleppo, the goods of the Turkey Company. During the eighteenth century, the Armenian community in Bengal prospered, and, favoured by many special grants from the Imperial court, secured much of the inland trade of the province. Several individuals raised themselves to positions of eminence during the civil wars preceding the overthrow of the Mughal power. Coja (Khwájah) Gregory, better known as Gurghin Khán, commanded the artillery of Mír Qásim at the battle of Gheriah, in August, 1763; while his brother, Coja Petrus, or Petrus Arrathoon, was still more intimately connected with the early struggles of the Company, being as Gumástha, or agent, of both Sirájuddaulah, and Mír Qásim, mixed up with many of the intrigues of that eventful period. The latter survived till 1782, when he died, leaving great wealth. At this time the Armenians were often charged, but probably without sufficient reason, with being turbulent and crafty, and doing much injury by thwarting the policy of the English Company. In spite of this accusation, however, they were permitted to reside in Calcutta in 1758; but an order forbidding their dwelling in the smaller factories was in force as late as 1765. The Court of Directors, regarding this busy people as the pioneers of commerce, issued an order that whenever a certain number congregated together, an Armenian church should be built for them.

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[1] " J. A. S." of Bengal, August, 1874.

[2] " Voyage," Liv. i, c. 7.

[3] " Annals of the E. I. Company," iii, 88, 160.

The history of the Armenian colony at Dacca has not been preserved. It is stated, on doubtful authority, that when Job Charnock returned to Calcutta in 1698, he invited the Armenian merchants in Dacca to settle in the new town; but the first authentic record is a time-worn tombstone in the old churchyard of Tezgáon, which marks the grave of one Avitis, an Armenian trader, who died on the 5th August, 1714. At the middle of the eighteenth century Armenians, as well as Europeans, were extensively engaged in the slave trade, and if we judge of the morality of the time by that described by one of their number, the standard was not a high one. In 1747 a rich Armenian died at Dacca without heirs, and to prevent the estate lapsing to the Nawáb, the narrator consented to come forward as a son of the deceased. The perjury is justified on the plea that it prevented "wild beasts from eating the flesh of lambs."[1]

According to the census of 1866 there were 703 Armenians resident in Calcutta, while on the 6th April, 1876, they numbered 707. In 1872, again, the Armenian population of Bengal proper was only 875, and of that number 710 resided in and around Calcutta, and 113 in Dacca. Mr. I. G. N. Pogose, in 1870, estimated the Dacca Armenians at 107, of whom 36 were males, 23 females, and 48 children. The professions and occupations of the males were as follows: one was a priest, five landholders, three merchants, one a barrister, five shopkeepers, seven shopmen, and four Government servants. Until comparatively recent times no Armenian could hold land; but under the Muhammadan rule many were farmers of the revenue and executive officers.

The causes which have checked the growth of the Armenians in Eastern India have been recapitulated by a writer in the Calcutta Review,[2] who points out that the early settlers were robust, energetic, and frugal men, devoting their whole time and thoughts to trade, while their descendants, lacking many of the peculiar traits of the race, have sadly degenerated. Separation from home influences, and association with alien races, effected a marked change of habits, and, resisting the introduction of European customs, they insensibly adopted many Indian ones. The indolence, moreover, induced by a hot, uncongenial climate, along with a rooted aversion to physical exertion, promoted habits of immorality and intemperance. Early marriages became fashionable, the offspring growing up sickly and tainted by disease. In-breeding still further impaired the race, and only those families who sought for brides in distant cities, or among immigrants from Persia, have inherited the muscular healthy constitutions of the parent stock. As late as a generation ago the Armenians of India were generally illiterate, being totally ignorant of European literature. They spoke and often read Armenian, they conversed fluently in Persian, Urdú, and Bengali; but they were unacquainted with the English language. Of late years, however, although Armenian is still the language of their homes, English is spoken universally, and an English education is considered indispensable. The English costume, too, is always worn, and the national dress is only seen on festive occasions.

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[1] "The Life and Adventures of Joseph Émïn, an Armenian." London, 1792.

[2] "The Armenian in India Physically considered," vol. xxx, June, 1858.

The modern Armenian is proverbially hospitable, while his open-handed charity to the poor of all creeds, his benevolence, and sympathy for the destitute and unfortunate of his own faith, and his kindness to his native servants and acquaintances, excite the admiration of his fellow townsmen.

The Catholicos, or Patriarch, of the Armenian church resides at Echmadzin, in Russian Armenia. Not only is he the Primate, but his monastery is the centre where pilgrims join in fraternal union with their brethren of other lands, and from which the Chrism, or holy oil, is brought for the services of the church in the East. The Bishop of Julfa has jurisdiction over all the Armenian churches in India, and by him the priests are inducted, or translated. India has so few attractions for the priesthood, that livings in that country, it is said, can only be got by an offering of twenty Tománs, equivalent to ten guineas. The priests met with in India are always married men, whose wives and families remain at Julfa, as hostages for their return. Five years is the fixed period of their residence, but on application a transfer to another church is often obtained. The greatest objection to this system is, that new arrivals can only converse in Persian and Armenian, while their flock speak Armenian, rarely Persian. Having acquired the vernacular, they are transferred to Singapore, or China, where another language has to be learned, under the same discouraging circumstances.

The position of an Armenian priest in India is an unenviable one. Separated from all his dearest ties, he finds himself in a small community stirred by the influences of strange races, and rival faiths, and dependent on the goodwill and liberality of his brethren. Services, beginning before daybreak, and lasting for six or seven hours, at which the congregation only attend towards the end; fasts twice every week, and during Lent continuing for weeks, tell upon the strongest constitutions. But the interest shown in the spiritual welfare of his flock, the sympathy shown to the sick and dying, and their moral, and generally blameless, lives, are the bonds which bind and endear them to their people.

The four great festivals of the Armenian church are the Nativity, Ascension, Annunciation, and that observed in honour of St. George. These festivals, as in the Greek church, are kept according to the old style; for instance, the Nativity, along with the Epiphany, on the 6th January. The Assumption, however, celebrated by the Greek and Latin churches on the 15th August, is commemmorated by the Armenian on the Sunday between the 12th and 18th of that month.

The dogmas, rites, and practices of the Armenian church in India[1] are identical with those of the parent establishment, being uninfluenced by contact with other Christian churches, but several customs are followed which are not mentioned by writers on such matters. Thus, on the Assumption, raisins wrapped in coloured paper are distributed in the church; and until late years a large pile of dry grass was collected near the church door on Ash Wednesday, and at a certain part of the service the congregation, carrying lighted tapers, defiled out of the building, and set fire to it.

At Easter and Christmas, after service, the priest visits each household, presenting the goodman with a cake of unleavened bread, in return for which he receives a fee, and his attendants wine, sweetmeats, and dyed eggs. Although they disbelieve in the purgatory of the Roman Church, Armenians admit that the spirits of the dead remain till the Day of Judgment in Paradise, or a place of probation. During Christmas and Holy Week, therefore, incense and wax tapers are forwarded to the priest who performs a service at the grave of the deceased relatives. Armenians are forbidden, like the Jews and Muhammadans, to eat blood or things strangled, and on Christmas and Easter the flesh eaten must have been killed by a Christian, and a godfather.

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[1] For interesting particulars regarding this Christian Sect, see "Histoire, Dogmes, Traditions et Liturgie de l'Eglise Arménienne Orientale." Par E. Dulaurier, Paris, 1855.

The public declaration of vows is one of the most solemn ceremonies of the Armenians. The person vowing presents the priest with two wax candles and two rupees for each pledge. Two gilt hands with the forefingers and thumbs united, the other fingers extended and adorned with jewels, being taken from the altar are dipped into holy water, and the lips of all present touched, while the witness kneeling rests his forehead on the floor. The priest, after repeating certain prayers, holds the two hands over the people and blesses them.

Armenians esteem the "Little Gospel" as only second in value to the Bible itself, and are fond of detailing incidents recorded in it. This uncanonical scripture is the "Historia de Nativitate Mariæ et de Infantiâ Salvatoris."[1]

Last century the Armenians observed many Persian, Bengali, and European customs. The dress of the men consisted of a Persian vest, or Jámah, fastened with a belt (Paṭká), and loose trousers. Their head-dress was a black brimless hat, about eight inches high. The costume of the women resembled that of the men, but the vests were longer. They wore the hair hanging down loose behind, adorned with strings of pearls and other gems, and covered with a hat, called Kambhara. Moreover, their teeth were stained with Misí, the hands and feet with Menhdí. It was considered indecorous and improper for the women to speak to, or appear before men in public, and, like the Muhammadan wife, the Armenian had to endure great hardships when most requiring sympathy; the doors and windows of her room were carefully closed against evil spirits for forty days, a fire was kept burning on the threshold, and no one dared to enter the room till mustard seed had been cast on the embers. As a further protection the child was arrayed with strings of amulets and charms.

The amusements of the men were confined to kite-flying, in which pastime much money was lost and won, and to the fighting of rams and game cocks. Native music was, and still is, preferred to European, and dinner parties wound up with "Nách" dancing and singing. At meals tables were not used, but mats and carpets being spread, the guests squatted and ate with their fingers. The Armenian *cuisine* more nearly resembles that of the Muhammadans than the English, and at feasts the variety of dishes is so embarrassing that the etiquette requiring each guest to taste of every dish becomes positively dangerous.

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[1] Giles' "Uncanonical Gospels." London, 1852.

Armenian marriages are ordinarily negotiated by the parents, or guardians. A few days before the wedding the hands and feet of the bride are stained with Menhdí. The bridle trousseau, exhibited on a table, is blessed by the priest, who takes two rings, dropping them into a glass of wine and consecrates it. The rings are then taken out and placed one on the ring finger of the bride, the other on that of the bridegroom. A portion of the wine being drunk by the bridegroom, he hands the glass to the bride, who tastes it. Sweetmeats wrapped in tinted paper, and a sherbet, known as "Guláb-nabát," are served to the guests.

The marriage ceremony in a few respects differs from that followed in Western Europe. For instance, before entering the church the pair, standing beneath the bell tower, plight their troth in the hearing of the priest, after which they kneel at the altar with their heads covered with veils. Throughout the service the sponsor holds a silver cross over the pair, and when the service ends the priest gives the bridegroom a belt and a cross, which are worn for three days, and can only be removed after the reading of certain prayers, until which time the marriage is not consummated.

As soon as an Armenian expires, the arms are crossed over the chest, and a wax taper being lighted, is placed at the head, while incense is burned in the room. The priest being informed of the death, orders the church bells to be tolled as an intimation to the friends. At the burial the priest, relatives, and friends follow on foot, while the coffin is preceded by persons carrying a cross and torches. The coffin is first of all placed beneath the campanile, and prayers being offered up, it is borne into the church and placed on a catafalque surrounded by tapers, where it remains until the appointed service is read.

In the room where the deceased expired a candle is kept constantly burning for forty days, while on the seventh and fortieth days, as well as on the anniversary of the death, a mass is celebrated in the church, and after the last service a feast, to which all relatives and friends are invited, is given, at which a peculiar kind of Puláo with raisins is handed round.

The future of the Armenian race in India is difficult to predict; but if the tendency to adopt English ideas and ways extends, it must overcome the contrary spirit still influencing the majority. In many respects the Jew and Armenian resemble one another. Cut off from the cradle of their religion and nationality they sojourn apart from the European, and exhibit few sympathies for the Hindu or Muhammadan. Each has preserved an ancient established religion which, ordinarily at least, debars the alien and Gentile from admission into its pale, and each is yearning for a spiritual and temporal supremacy in their original home. With such aspirations, however, it has become the habit with Armenians to educate their boys as English parents do, and so successfully has this been followed out, that several have in competition gained admission into the Army and Indian Civil Service. The education and position of the Armenian female, however, leaves much to be desired. She is generally brought up with only a superficial knowledge of any language; she leads a secluded, uninteresting life, diversified by attendance at church, and by visits to her relatives, and her sympathies are neither cultivated nor encouraged. Until she is raised to an equality with her husband, and acquires those accomplishments which adorn her European sister, it cannot be predicated of the Armenians that the future is for them altogether bright and cheerful.

SECTION V.

PORTUGUESE OF EASTERN BENGAL.

FIRST APPEARANCE IN 1516.
JESUIT MISSION, 1599.
WARFARE WITH MAGS AND MUGHALS DURING SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.
FINAL SUBMISSION, 1665.
PORTUGUESE MISSION.
CENSUS OF PORTUGUESE CHRISTIANS.
THEIR PRESENT OCCUPATIONS AND HABITS.

PORTUGUESE IN EASTERN BENGAL.

"THE first Portugall," as far as Antonio Galvam knew,[1] "which drunke of the river Ganges was a knight, called J. Coello." In 1516 Fernando Perez de Andrada was sent with a letter to him, but the credit of having discovered and observed the country is due to Don John de Silveira, who was commissioned in 1518 to negotiate with the King of Bengal. The embassy was hospitably received by the governor of "Chatigan," but a quarrel arose, and though speedily quelled broke out again, and with great difficulty a treaty was concluded. The governor, however, was only dissembling. The Portuguese vessels were attacked by a swarm of war boats, which they repulsed, but were obliged to retire to Ceylon in a very crippled state.[2]

Another account is, that Silveira, being sent to establish a factory in Bengal, met with a most unfriendly reception owing to a rumour that his fleet was a piratical one. The expedition passed the winter amid great hardships, especially from famine, and the crews would have perished miserably but for the opportune arrival of another flotilla under Juan Coello.[3]

It is in connection with this expedition that Dacca is first mentioned in history. Fonseca refers to a governor of the city of "Daracca," and Castanheda styles him "do Señor da Cidade Darraçao."[4]

In 1527 a Portuguese vessel was wrecked on the coast of Chakaria, south of Chatigan. The crew on reaching dry land were ill-treated by the inhabitants and one of them killed.[5]

As early as 1528 the Emperor Baber casually mentions that the Bengalis were famous for their knowledge of artillery, acquired, there is reason for believing, from the Portuguese. A few years later Mahmúd Sháh, king of Bengal, hard pressed by the Afgháns under Shír Sháh, applied for aid to the Viceroy at Goa. In 1537 a small force was sent under Martin Alfonso de

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[1] "The Discoveries of the World." Reprinted by the Hakluyt Society, p. 131.

[2] "Osorio da Fonseca," p. 412; "Lopez de Castanheda," Lib. iv, cc. 38, 39.

[3] "Faria-y-Sousa," i, 220.

[4] "Fonseca," Lib. xi, 413; "Castanheda," op. cit.

[5] "Histoire Générale des Voyages," i, 141.

Melo, but before it could reach Gauṛ, that city had been taken by the Afgháns. The Portuguese soldiers were at first ill-used, but their bravery in holding the pass of Taliágaṛh gained them better treatment, and permission was granted to build a fort at Chatigan.

The Portuguese had no established government, settlement, or fortress in Bengal at the end of the sixteenth century. As a writer remarks, having no laws, no police, and no religion, they lived like the natives. A lucrative and thriving trade, however, was carried on at Hughli, or, as it was then called, Golin and Porto Pequèno, as well as at Chatigan, or Porto Grande. Furthermore, numerous Portuguese adventurers resided with their families in Bandels,[1] trading in salt and cotton goods, which were shipped in "Foists," or Jaleas, to Dianga,[2] and the Portuguese settlements on the Malabar coast. Others took service with native princes and fought bravely against Mughal and Afghán. These mercenaries were regarded as rebels (levantádos del rey), because they neither assisted their countrymen nor paid tribute to the Goa Government. Their character was infamous. The majority was composed of military deserters, ruined traders, renegade priests, and spendthrifts of all ranks and professions, who, resorting to Bengal, led scandalous lives, without any religion or law. The dishonour brought on the Christian name forced the Church to interfere, and at the end of 1597 a deputation, consisting of two Jesuit fathers from Goa and one from Dianga, was sent by the Archbishop of Goa to preach the gospel in Bengal and minister to the Portuguese settled there.

In 1598 the fathers arrived at Hughli, where many Portuguese and native Christians resided. The number of professing Christians far exceeded what was anticipated, and at "Ciandecan," or Jessore, the mission baptised two hundred free and bond men. The toleration of the native rulers and officials is most surprising. When the fathers left Hughli, after founding a school and an hospital, the first in Bengal, the Munçif did not exact the customary fees. At "Ciandecan" they were given a piece of land rent free on which to build a church, and got permission to preach and convert at pleasure. At Ṣrípúr the same liberality was shown. Six hundred pieces of gold were assigned as an annual contribution; while at Baklá the salary of two priests was paid by the Rája.

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[1] From Persian "Bandar," an emporium, mart.

[2] The site of Dianga is still doubtful. Du Jarric (Liv. vi) says it is "une ville sise en ce port de Chatigam, ou les nefs qui viennent de l'Inde, mouillent l'anchre." Van der Heiden describes it as "eene Stadt in de haven van Chatigam."

In 1601 the Jesuits had two missions in Eastern Bengal, one at Jessore, the other at Chatigan. Owing, however, to disturbances, the Jesuit fathers were withdrawn, and the church of Eastern Bengal was transferred to the care of Augustinian monks from Goa. At the end of the sixteenth century there were churches at Jessore, Baklá, Dacca, Ṣrípúr, and Noricol,[1] supported by Portuguese settlers and native converts.[2]

Very little is said of the internal condition of the country. Ḍákáíts infested the tidal branches of the Ganges at that time, as they did two centuries later. The country generally was remarkably fertile, and the abundance of corn and fruit almost incredible. Wherever they went the Hindu and Muhammadan inhabitants treated them with marked respect and kindness. Father Pimenta has left us the following charming description of the scenery of the Delta.

"The route from Baklá to Jessore is so agreeable and picturesque that I have not seen its equal. Plains irrigated by numerous rivers whose banks are adorned with the most beautiful trees. On the one side you perceive large herds of deer, on the other flocks of cattle. I forbear mentioning the luxuriant fields of rice, the thickets of sugar-bearing reeds (*Arundineta calamis mellifluis redundantia*), the hives of bees, the monkeys bounding from tree to tree, and such like objects that afford pleasure to travellers. Tigers and crocodiles that feed through our neglect, or fault, on human beings, are common. In the woods rhinoceroses are seen, but thus far I have met with none."[3]

In 1602 the Portuguese of Chittagong, being harassed by attacks of the Arakanese, made Sondíp their chief stronghold. This island, situated in the estuary of the Ganges, is probably the oldest and most permanent of the group which the mighty river is for ever building up and destroying. It had belonged to the Rájah of Baklá, but the Muhammadans took possession, and when Le Blanc and Cæsar Frederick landed, between 1565 and 1586, the Moorish inhabitants were most friendly and courteous. The fertility of the island was unparalleled, the population large and prosperous, and the cheapness of food extraordinary. The manufacture of salt and the trade of shipbuilding were carried on with great energy and success.

The Portuguese, under command of Dominique Carvallho, a vassal of the Baklá Rájah, and Manuel de Mattos, from Chatigan, seized the island, but before they could secure their hold the King of Arakan[1] with a large fleet, and supported by a hundred "Kosahs[2]" from Ṣrípúr, sailed for Sondíp. The Portuguese joined battle and were victorious, capturing over a hundred war boats, but so many of their own vessels were disabled that they hastily evacuated the island and retreated to Baklá, Ṣrípúr, and "Ciandecan." The King of Arakan having recovered Sondíp, invaded Baklá, threatened Jessore, and boasted that he would conquer the whole of Bengal.

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[1] In Rájnagar, on right bank of Padma.

[2] For further particulars regarding the Jesuit Mission, see R. P. Petri Jarrici, "Thesaurus," iii, 2, c. xxix; "De rebus Japonicis, Indicis, &c." À Johanne Hayo, Scoto, S. J. P., 809; "Exemplum Epistolæ P. Nicolai Pimentæ." Romæ, 1602.

[3] "Exemplum," p. 91.

In May, 1603, Carvallho was at Ṣrípúr, a city belonging to the Bhúya Kedar Ráí, superintending the equipment of thirty "Jaleas,"[3] when a fleet sent by the viceroy, Rájah Man Singh, and consisting of one hundred "Kosahs" under "Mandarai,"[4] hove in sight. Carvallho, hastily disposing his ships, engaged the enemy, and after a stubborn fight captured several vessels, and put the rest to flight. Mandarai was slain, and Carvallho severely wounded. The Muhammadan historian[5] gives a very different account of the battle. Kaid Ráí Zamíndár, of Bikrampúr, he says, had been subdued by Rájah Man Singh, but in 1603, forming an alliance with the Mag Raján, he rebelled and laid siege to a fort near Sunnárgáon. On hearing of this rebellion the viceroy sent a force under Ibráhim Atka, and others. The confederates were defeated and many boats taken. The narrative, however, ends with the suspicious statement that the Rájah was compelled to entrench himself in front of the imperial troops to provide safety against their attacks.

Carvallho proceeded to Hughli to have his wounds treated, and on his recovery, being invited by the Bhúya of Jessore to join in a war against the Mags, he proceeded, in spite of many warnings, to that court, where he was made prisoner and put to death.

Although the Portuguese were turbulent and lawless, pillaging Mags, Hindus, and Muhammadans without distinction, they were sometimes entrusted with high military commands in Bengal. For instance, Pyrard de Laval mentions[6] one "Jean Garie," who had under him ten thousand of the Bengal troops.

In 1607 the Mag Rájah made war, captured Dianga, and drove the survivors to the islands of the Meghna. Sondíp, which had fallen into the hands of the Mughals, was held by a force under Fath Khán, who had put to death all the Portuguese and the Christian slaves in the island. A few escaped with Sebastian Gonzales Tibao, and became pirates, plundering villages and conveying the booty to Baklá, where they sold it. Fath Khán having equipped a fleet, set sail to extirpate these pests, but Sebastian Pinto attacked his vessels off Dakhin Sháhbázpúr, destroyed a great number, and killed Fath Khán. In March, 1609, the Portuguese, supported by troops from Baklá, laid siege to the fort of Sondíp, held by the Mughals under a brother of Fath Khán, while the Hindu population looked on with characteristic indifference. The fort was stormed and taken after a gallant defence. The garrison and all the Muhammadans in the island, a thousand in number, were in retaliation massacred in cold blood. Gonzales perfidiously broke the agreement made with the Baklá Rájah, and instead of paying him half the revenue obtained from the island, refused to come to any understanding. The adjacent islands of Dakhin Sháhbázpúr and Paṭelá-bhanga were annexed, and having in this lawless manner acquired possession of a small territory, Gonzales ruled both with wonderful tact and sagacity. Trade flourished, and the Portuguese became the envy and dread of the neighbouring princes. Good fortune also favoured them. A brother of the Mag Rajáh, expelled from his country, sought shelter at Sondíp. Gonzales married his sister, and after exacting a large sum of money, is suspected to have poisoned his brother-in-law.

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[1] "Rex Tiparæ, Chaconæ et Bengalæ, Pegusii dominus." De Jarric, tom. iii, lib. 3, c. xxix.

[2] A "Kosah" was a war boat driven by oars, but having one mast.

[3] A "Jalea," from Sanskrit "Jala," water, was a name applied to boats generally.

[4] "Vir impiger et totâ Bengalâ notissimus." De Jarric. Mandarim was the title given by the Portuguese to any governor, or commander, in the East. It is derived from "Mandár," to command. The English title, Mandarin, for a Chinese official, is the same word.

[5] Elliot's "History of India," vi, 109.

[6] "Voyage de François Pyrard de Laval," p. 239.

The unsettled state of the eastern frontier, and the devastation of the Delta by the Portuguese, forced Jahángír to transfer the seat of government from Ráj-Mahal to Dacca. In 1608 the viceroy, Islám Khán Fathpúrí, removed to the new capital and at once took measures to extirpate the Portuguese, and secure a durable peace. The district of Dacca was then a settled portion of the empire, but farther south Mughals, Afgháns, and rebellious vassals[1] contended for power. In 1610 the Mag Rájah made a treaty with Gonzales, in which it was agreed that the latter should command the allied fleets and act in concert with the Arakan army as it marched along the coast, and that all territory conquered should be equally divided between the two contracting parties. The campaign began, Lakhípúr and Bhaluah were overrun, but on meeting the Mughal army the Arakanese, owing to the shameful defection of the Portuguese, were totally defeated. Gonzales, a witness of the disastrous battle, fled to Sondíp, after putting to death all the captains of the Mag fleet. The Mughals reoccupied Bhaluah without opposition, but did not follow the fugitives to Chátgáon. To consummate his villainy Gonzales waged war against his late allies, plundered and burned their villages, and, sailing up the Arakan river, attempted, but unsuccessfully, to capture the vessels anchored there.

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[1] In a mosque at Farrídpúr is an inscription of the date A. H. 1013 (1604), preserving the name of one 'Ajab Bahádur Khán Sultání, but omitting all mention of an Emperor, which could only have been erected by a rebel.

Up to this time Gonzales had refused to obey, or recognise, the viceroy at Goa, but in 1615, being hard pressed by the Mags, he submitted and urged an immediate invasion of Arakan. A fleet was accordingly sent under command of D. Francis de Menezes Roxo. It sailed up the Arakan river on the 3rd October, but the Mags, assisted by some Dutch vessels, offered a stubborn resistance, and obliged the Portuguese to retire. In November Gonzales arrived with fifty sail, when a combined attack was made, but De Menezes being killed, the assailants fell into disorder and retreated.

Gonzales returned to Sondíp, but his power and popularity were gone, and his dispirited followers quarrelling among themselves, allowed the Mags to take the island. After ruling nine years, Gonzales was stripped of his possessions; "his sovereignty passed like a shadow, his pride was humbled, and his villainies punished."[1]

The Portuguese never recovered from this defeat, although their flag waved for many years unchallenged in the Delta, and the imperial Nawárah dared not meet their "Galliasses[2] in fair fight. Bernier,[3] however, makes mention of another Portuguese adventurer who acquired temporary power. "It was these same pirates," he says, "who at this time took Sondíp, in which a certain notorious monk of S. Augustine, named Fra Joañ, acted the petty sovereign for several years, having managed, God knows how, to get rid of (*se defaire*) the commandant of the place."

For the next fifty years the Portuguese lived by piracy, and by making raids upon the peaceful villages of Bengal. Some entered the military employ of the Arakan monarch, and commanded expeditions sent against Bengal, Pegu, and Siam;[4] others joined the imperial artillery, and Jahángír was wont to say that one Portuguese soldier would beat three of his own people.

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[1] "Faria y Sousa," iii, 268.

[2] Tavernier describes the "Galeaça" as a long swift boat, often with fifty oars a side, and two men to each oar. It was generally gaudily painted and ornamented with blue colours and gold foil.

[3] "Histoire de la dernière revolution des États du Grand Mogol." Paris, 1670. The incident is not mentioned by Faria y Sousa, whose history ends with 1640; and as Bernier left India in 1668, it must have occurred between these dates.

[4] "Voyage de Wouter Schouten," ii, 168.

Many assisted Sháh Shújá in his ill-starred rebellion of 1660, and when his cause was lost became Dákáíts infesting the Sunderbuns, and lying in ambush in a creek near Ságar, still known as "Rogues' River," waylaid vessels beating up the Hughli.

In 1662 the shipwrecked crew of the "Ter Schelling"[1] arrived at Bhaluah, where they found Muhammadans speaking Portuguese, and the Moorish commander protected by a body-guard "consisting wholly of Christians negro-born, and subjects of the King of Portugal," who were treated with especial honour on account of their valour. Other writers, however, give a different estimate of these "negro-born" Portuguese, and in the seventeenth century their usual sobriquet was "Gallínhas del Mar," on account of their habitual cowardice. The history of two centuries confirms the latter judgment, and, except under very exceptional circumstances, the Portuguese Eurasian has never proved himself a valiant soldier.

The capture of Hughli in 1632, and the slaughter of its brave defenders, was the death blow to Portuguese prestige in Bengal, and in 1666, when Sháyista Khán determined on annexing Cháṭgáon and the islands at the mouth of the Meghna, he threatened the Portuguese with the fate of the Hughli garrison if they did not submit and become subjects of Sháh Jahán. The evil deeds which provoked the Muhammadan viceroy to interference are detailed by Bernier, a most prejudiced authority. Bad as the Portuguese undoubtedly were, their cruelty was exceeded by that of the Mags, who penetrated into the interior pillaging and ravaging the country, and leaving behind a name hateful even to modern Bengalis.

On the appointment of Sháyista Khán in 1664 to the government of Bengal, an expedition was organised against the Portuguese banditti. The fleet, a very powerful one, supported by several Dutch vessels, being put into the highest state of efficiency, was directed to act in concert with the army preparing to march on Chittagong. Alarmed by these preparations, and won over by bribes, many Portuguese left Chittagong "in forty or fifty galliasses," and gave themselves up as prisoners to the Nawáb at Dacca, who overwhelmed them with favours. Many were induced by large pay to enlist in the Imperial army, while a settlement at Farangí Bazár was established for the old and physically unfit.

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[1] "A Relation of an unfortunate Voyage to the Kingdom of Bengala." By Mr. Glanius. London, 1682, 8vo. This is merely an English translation of "Vervarelyke Schip-Breuk van t'oost Indisch Jacht Ter Schelling under het landt van Bengale." Amsterdam, 1675, 4to. The author is Frans van der Heiden.

When the army and fleet of the Mughals advanced upon Chittagong, the island of Sondíp was occupied by Diláwar, a Muhammadan, and troops in league with the Mags. A detachment was landed, the fort was besieged and taken, but a Mag flotilla coming in sight, the troops were hurriedly withdrawn, and the transports sailed to Nawakhálí. In the following December a larger force occupied the island, and held it. The main army then advanced along the coast, meeting with little opposition. Letters were sent to the Portuguese in the Mag service offering advantageous terms on submission. Several of these letters being intercepted, the Mag Rájah tried to induce the soldiers to remove into the interior of Arakan, but refusing to do so, they finally left in a body for Bengal. On the 18th December, 1665, they arrived at Nawakhálí, and the leaders set out for Dacca, where they were graciously received by the viceroy. Some were enrolled as volunteers under an Englishman named Captain Moore,[1] and joined in the expedition against Chittagong.

On the 16th January, 1666, the garrison of that town capitulated, and the Portuguese soldiers who had distinguished themselves in the campaign received grants of land.

With the capture of Chittagong and the pacification of the Eastern frontier the history of the Portuguese, as an independent and aggressive power, terminates. Throughout the Dacca and adjoining districts numerous settlements of Portuguese Christians are still to be found, but none can claim relationship with the soldiers of the seventeenth century.

The following sketch of the Portuguese mission since its foundation in Bengal embraces the origin and history of these settlements.

The Portuguese mission in Bengal was founded in 1598, by the Augustine Archbishop of Goa. On arrival at Hughli the missionaries obtained a grant of rent-free land. This grant originally consisted of 260 acres, but during last century it dwindled one-half. A chapel was built at Bandel, near Chinsurah, and dedicated to "Nuestra Senora del Rosario." The first "regent" was Fre Bernardo de Jesus, and to this church all the other parochial churches in Bengal were affiliated.

Since the beginning of the seventeenth century the Bishop of S. Thomé, or Mailapúr, in Madras, has been the head of the Bengal Church. In 1606 Pope Paulus V made S. Thomé an episcopal see, and by consistorial letters annexed to it the provinces of Bengal, Pegu, and Orissa. The special mission to

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[1] Nothing further has been learned regarding this soldier, but at the present day a small "Tappá" or division, in Bikrampúr is named after him.

Bengal was vested in the Augustinian monks of Goa, upon one of whom the title and prerogatives of Vicar General were conferred.

A tradition is preserved by the mission, that in 1599 one of their number, Fre Luis des Chagos, was stopped on his way to Silhet by certain Christians who besought him to relieve them from landlord tyranny. On his return he bought the villages and lands of Nágori and Bhágori in Bhowál, settling in them thirteen families of Christians, including a converted Bráhman. A piece of land was also purchased at Náráyandih, a suburb of Dacca, which still belongs to the mission.

The church of Nágori, however, bears the date 1664, and is dedicated to St. Nicola da Tolentino,[1] the patron saint of the Augustine order.

During the seventeenth century the success of the Augustine monks was most extraordinary. In 1602, three years after its foundation, the Hughli mission consisted of over 500 persons, among whom were many "grands seigneurs," and by the end of the century the sacrament was administered to 10,000 converts.

The parochial church of Dacca, dedicated "a la Assumpcion de nuestra Senora," was at Tezgáon, on the north of the city, and its graveyard still contains the oldest tombstones and epitaphs in Eastern Bengal. The early history of the mission is very interesting. Its success was chiefly owing to the conversion of a member of a distinguished Hindu family. The son of the Zamíndár of Bosnah,[2] one of the twelve Bhúyas, moved by the preaching of the monks, was persuaded to become a Christian. Being baptized as Don Antonio del Rosario, he induced his wife and brethren to follow his example.

Manrique,[3] a Spanish Augustine monk, describing Dacca in 1641, mentions that families of Christians resided in the suburbs, at Náráyandih, "Manaxor," and "Pulgari," and that a handsome, though small, convent, as well as a good church, existed. Much intolerance was practised by Muhammadan Mullas, Pírs, and Darweshes, who denounced all Christians for eating animals slaughtered in an unorthodox way. The Nawáb, however, protected them, and the position of the mission was so secure that another chapel and residency were about to be built in Dacca as well as two in the Bandels of Ṣrípúr and Norícol. In

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[1] S. Nicola da Tolentino died A.D. 1308, and was canonized by encyclical letters of Pope Eugenius IV, in 1446.

[2] "Donde assiste Don Antonio del Rosario, hijo del Rey de Busna, à quien no solo convertieron nostros religiosos sinoque le redimio del cautiverio el Padre Manuel del Rosario," p. 24. "Christiandad del Japan." Su Autor El P.M. Fr. Joseph Sicardo. En Madrid 1698, fol.

[3] "Itinerario de las Missiones que hizo El Padre F. Sebastian Manrique." Roma, 1649, 4to.

1679 the converts in Eastern Bengal were estimated at 30,000, and Don Antonio, attached to the Church of Norícol in Rájnagar, had joint charge with the "rector" of 1,000 Christians.

At the end of the seventeenth century the Portuguese churches in Eastern Bengal and Assam were those of "Chandpúr in Tipperah, Banja, perhaps Banga, in Farrídpúr, Pippli, Balasor, "Tambolin," Jessore with 300 Christians, Hughli, Tezgáon, Dacca, and "Arrayal de Bencamatis," or Rangamati, in Assam. In 1713 Laynez, Bishop of S. Thomé, visited Bengal. He found Christian congregations at Hughli, Pippli, Chittagong, Dacca, Husainpúr in Mymensingh, and Rangamati in Assam.

It is difficult to arrive at any certain conclusion regarding the number of Portuguese Christians at different periods. Bernier was told by the priests that Hughli contained over 8,000, and that in other parts of Bengal there were 25,000. Monsignor Cerri,[1] secretary of the congregation De propagandâ fide, writing about 1680, estimated the number at 22,000, divided into eleven parishes, each of which had a vicar and a curate. It was, he admits, hard to find any adult converts save Portuguese slaves, who had been bought, and made Christians. In 1840, according to Mr. Taylor,[2] the number belonging to the three parishes of Dacca, Bhowál, and Husainábád was 10,150. In 1873 the Portuguese vicar of Husainábád calculated that 3,000 persons belonged to his church, while the French priest of the adjoining parish rated his at 1,200.

The census of the Dacca Farangís for 1877 and 1878 has been kindly furnished by Mr. R. D. Lyall, C.S., who considers the returns of the French Mission more exact than the Portuguese.

Mission.	*Parishes.*	1877.	1878.
Portuguese	Dacca	103	212
	Nágori	1,221	1,265
	Tezgáon	140	122
	Husainábád	2820	2833
		4,284	4,432
French	Bandura	5,000	1,440
	Tumilía		2,020
	Sualpúr		
			4,060

The total number of Dacca Farangís may therefore be estimated at 8,500, but nearly 2,000 under the French fathers, being converted natives, have no right to be called Farangís at all

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[1] "An Account of the Roman Catholic Religion throughout the World," translated by Sir Richard Steele. London 1715.

[2] "Topography of Dacca," p. 252.

The system by which the Portuguese made converts was not one that could prosper. Children of both sexes, either kidnapped or purchased, were made Christians, while girls after baptism became concubines and their offspring Christians. At one time this trade flourished to such an extent that the slave-dealers boasted of having converted more Hindus in a year than all the missionaries of India did in ten. When the Portuguese power in the Delta was overthrown slave-catching ceased, and a final blow was dealt to this novel plan of converting the natives. With the seventeenth century the Portuguese mission ceased to triumph, and during the last century and a half it has not held its own against Muhammadan aggression. Many reasons for this failure are assigned, but Monsignor Cerri refers it to the immorality of the priests and laity, the former leading loose lives, exhibiting great ignorance and extreme avarice, and retaining large staffs of servants given up to all manner of vice and lewdness. The Goa priests, to whose care the Christians of Bengal were confided, have for many generations been half-castes, born and bred at Goa. Each parish church, moreover, is endowed with rent-free land, or with property held and managed by the vicar. Communication with S. Thomé being irregular and uncertain, the internal economy and discipline of the parishes are not interfered with as long as the annual donation is sent to Goa. An illiterate priesthood, a rich isolated establishment, and a simple credulous laity, was a combination of evils sufficient to ruin any church. No one who has given a thought to the Portuguese clergy of Eastern Bengal can wonder that they, inheriting a faulty system from their predecessors, have failed to instil new life among their flocks. Occupied as they generally are with the management of valuable church property, and of lawsuits inseparable from the possession of land in Bengal, little time, and less zeal, are expended on the spiritual welfare of their tenantry. A school is always attached to the church, but the instruction given is of the most rudimentary kind, and no attempts are made to raise the standard of education.

Such being the actual state of matters, it is not surprising that the congregation De propagandâ fide has for long been striving to gain possession of the churches and endowments of the Portuguese mission. Various lawsuits have been instituted, and in several instances, as at Dacca and Chittagong, the decision of the courts has been in favour of the congregation. The French mission, guided by the able and benevolent Monseigneur Dufal, has within the last fifteen years infused new spiritual life among these neglected Christians. The good bishop, assisted by an admirable staff of clergy, devote themselves to improving the people, and their schools are crowded with hundreds of boys eager for knowledge. The nuns of the "Sacré Cœur" are engaged in an equally beneficent task. To them is confided the religious and moral training of the girls, and the schools conducted by them are models of order and propriety.

Two centuries ago the Portuguese Christians were divided into three classes, "reynol," including those born in Europe, "castiço," those born in India of Portuguese parents, and "mestiço," or half-castes. These three classes no longer exist. The modern Christians are for the most part the offspring of the last and most numerous division, but they have lost all traces of their European parentage. Here and there a face, characterised by large and rugged features, strikes a stranger accustomed to the regular and more delicate lineaments of the average Bengali, but in complexion the Farangís are as swarthy as a Chaṇḍál. The distinctive and favourite appellation of these Christians is Farangí, but the natives nickname them the "Kálá" or "Maṭṭí," earth-coloured Farangís.

The Farangí peasant dresses exactly like the Hindu or Muhammadan ryot, but on gala days, especially among the wealthier classes, the peculiar costume, still worn at Chittagong, is put on. It consists of striped drawers, a shirt, or cloth doublet, a skull cap with flaps fastened behind, and slippers. The women on festivals wear a white lace veil, or mantilla, covering the head and shoulders, while the common dress is a petticoat and a loose muslin jacket.[1]

In Bhowál the title Bocto (Sanskrit Bhakta, a worshipper), is exclusively applied to the families of the first settlers, but in other places the name, it is said, was given to the secretaries who also acted as catechists in the absence of the pastor.[2]

According to the French clergy, the Dacca Farangís are more moral, but quite as improvident as those of Chittagong. A poor man will not hesitate to borrow three hundred rupees for his marriage, while the rich will often squander eight hundred for the same purpose. The Bazár rate of interest being exorbitant, the borrower becomes impoverished for life, and rarely succeeds in clearing himself of the debt. The large majority of Farangís in Eastern Bengal are simple peasants, but many young men go to Calcutta, taking service as cooks, or undertakers ("Poberies" from the Portuguese Pobre, poor).

The peasantry are industrious though poor. They cultivate the church lands, but the profit of their toil goes to Goa to support churches and monasteries. On the whole, their position is an unenviable one, being worse than that of ryots under good native landlords, who generally do something for the improvement of their estates.

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[1] For further particulars regarding the "Feringhees," see "Calcutta Review," vol. liii, for 1871.

[2] Père Barbier, however, writing from Chittagong in 1713, says: "Les Chrétiens du dedans des terres, nommés Boctos." Lettres Édifiantes, ii, 590.

The minor excommunication, depriving the sinner of the sacraments until he yields and confesses his faults, is at once a powerful and convenient weapon for subduing any quarrelsome ryot. When the priest is only the farmer and a Bráhman the landlord, the edifying spectacle is seen of a peasant appealing to the latter for redress, who, if he thinks the punishment excessive, issues an order to readmit the accused to all the privileges of the church, and very rarely is the order disobeyed.

The majority of Farangís read and some write Bengali, which has become the vernacular of all classes. Each individual is given at baptism a Portuguese name, but an assumed Bengali one is commonly used. A few Portuguese words are still spoken, and the names of festivals and religious ceremonies are the same as in Europe. Yet, strange to say, Lent is called "Roza," the Persian name of the Ramazán fast. No Farangí possesses a Bible, but each one wears a rosary and a crucifix. On Fridays they eschew flesh, and during Lent observe a strict fast. In most houses a recess, containing an altar, or "Prie-dieu," is found, before which a lamp is lighted every evening, and on which flowers are arranged on "festá" days.

On account of the prejudices of Hindus and Muhammadans there is no Farangí shopkeeper in the villages of the interior. In Bhowál swine are generally kept, and large quantities of ham, bacon, and pork sausages, exported to Calcutta.

Farangís live in friendship and neighbourly sympathy with the natives, and are generally esteemed for moderation and liberality. They cannot, however, be considered the equal of the frugal, sober, and industrious Hindu or Muhammadan ryot. In blind subservience to their priests, in superstition, and in servility to oppression, the Farangís are on a par with their neighbours, but in their intemperate habits, against which the pulpit fulminates in vain, they sink below the non-Christian races around them.

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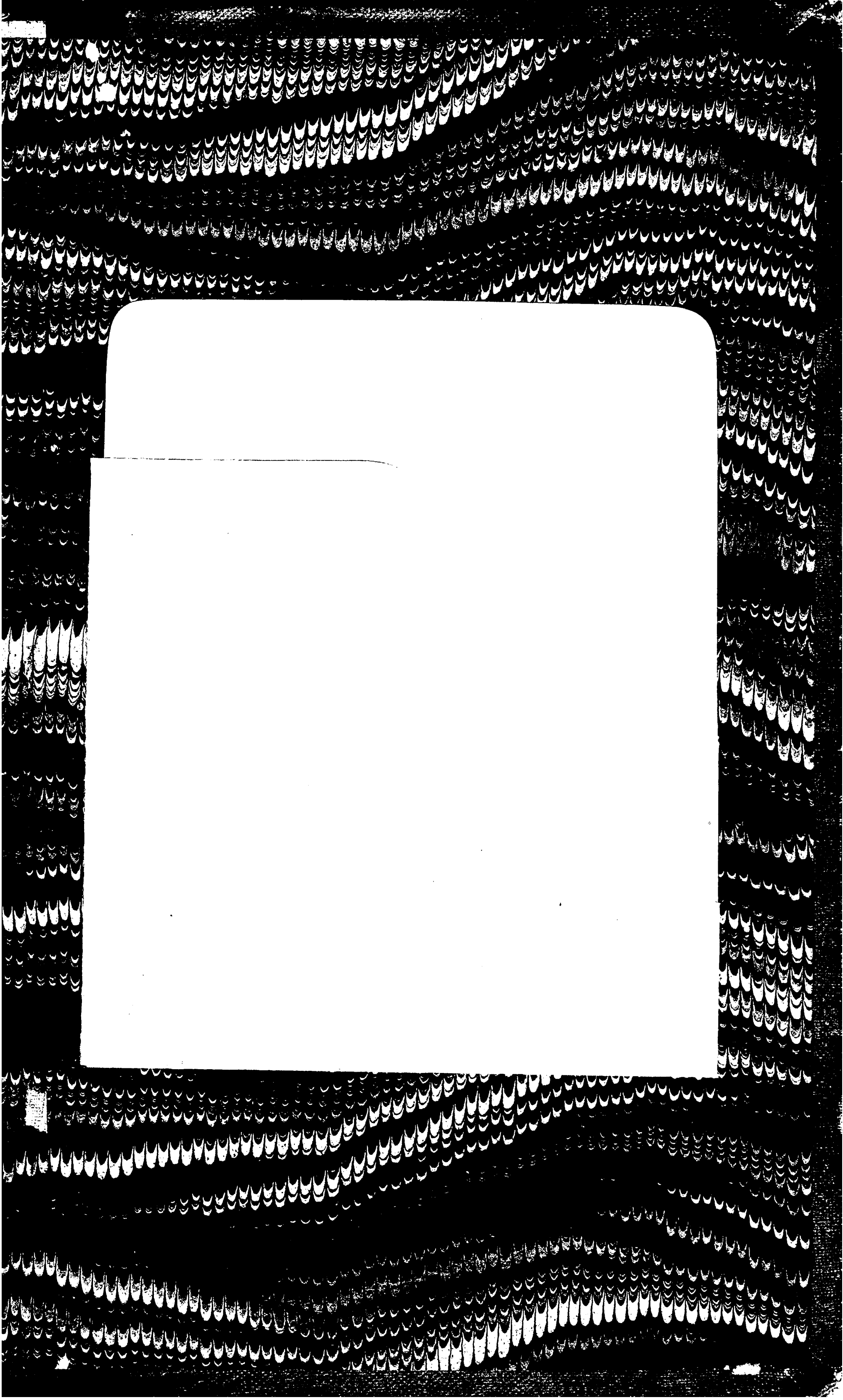

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4 PT ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZabcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz;:",./?$0123456789

6 PT ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZabcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz;:",./?$0123456789

8 PT ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZabcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz;:",./?$0123456789

10 PT ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZabcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz;:",./?$0123456789

News Gothic Bold Reversed

4 PT ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZabcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz;:",./?$0123456789

6 PT ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZabcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz;:",./?$0123456789

8 PT ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZabcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz;:",./?$0123456789

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Bodoni Italic

4 PT ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZabcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz;:",./?$0123456789

6 PT ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZabcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz;:",./?$0123456789

8 PT ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZabcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz;:",./?$0123456789

10 PT ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZabcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz;:",./?$0123456789

Greek and Math Symbols

4 PT ΑΒΓΔΕΞΘΗΙΚΛΜΝΟΠΦΡΣΤΥΩΧΨΖαβγδεξθηικλμνοπφρστυωχψζ≧∓",./≦±=≠°><⋟⋞⋗⋖≡

6 PT ΑΒΓΔΕΞΘΗΙΚΛΜΝΟΠΦΡΣΤΥΩΧΨΖαβγδεξθηικλμνοπφρστυωχψζ≧∓",./≦±=≠°><⋟⋞⋗⋖≡

8 PT ΑΒΓΔΕΞΘΗΙΚΛΜΝΟΠΦΡΣΤΥΩΧΨΖαβγδεξθηικλμνοπφρστυωχψζ≧∓",./≦±=≠°><⋟⋞⋗⋖≡

10 PT ΑΒΓΔΕΞΘΗΙΚΛΜΝΟΠΦΡΣΤΥΩΧΨΖαβγδεξθηικλμνοπφρστυωχψζ≧∓",./≦±=≠°><⋟⋞⋗⋖≡

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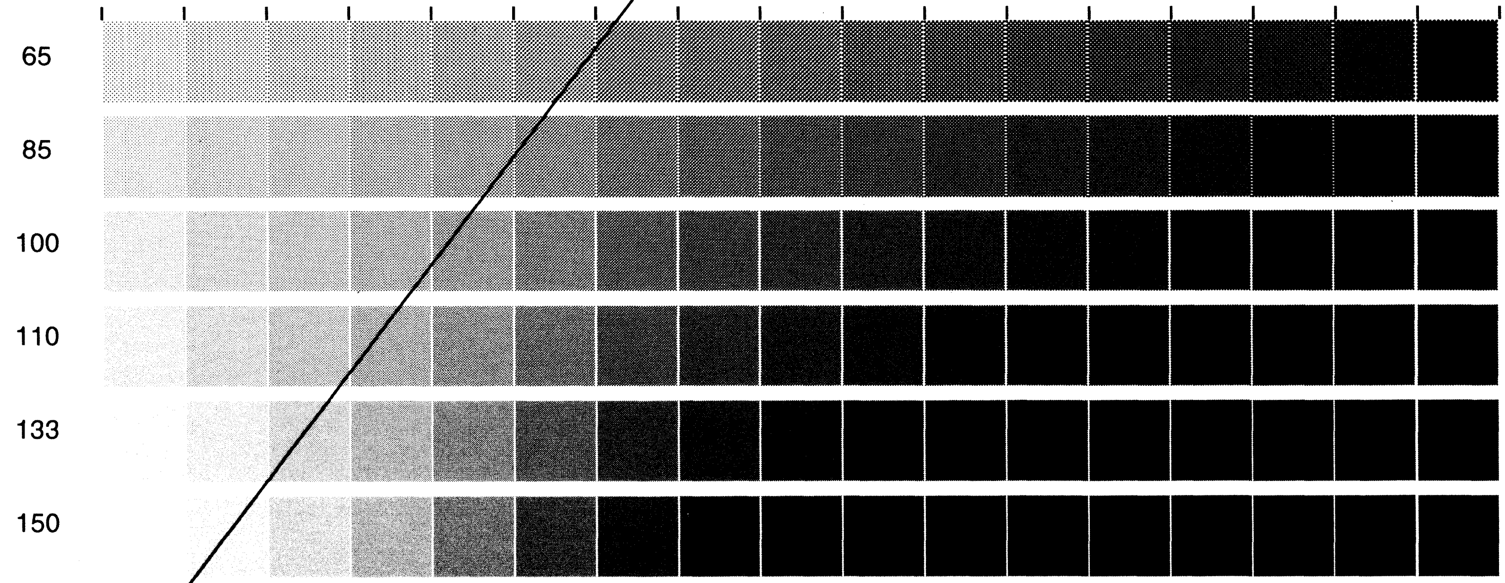
MESH HALFTONE WEDGES



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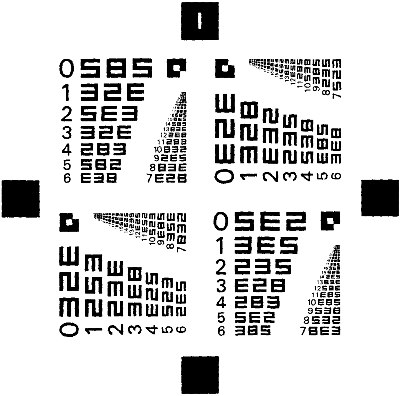
RIT ALPHANUMERIC RESOLUTION TEST OBJECT, RT-1-71



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